

**NEW TESTAMENT
PROPHECIES
AND
RETURN OF JESUS
CHRIST**

Pir Waheed Ahmad

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FOREWORD

Around the second half of the nineteenth century, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} (1835-1908) of Qadian, India, claimed to be the personification of Jesus Christ^{as} who was to appear in the Latter Days. According to him, his advent took place according to the prophecies mentioned in the Bible and in the Traditions¹ of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa}.

The return of Jesus Christ^{as} is perhaps the most extraordinary event in our time and age. The appearance of any reformer raised by God is a notable occurrence in the history of any religion. However, such an event becomes all the more important when it is prophesied by the likes of Jesus Christ^{as} and the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa}.

This brief booklet deals with the specific period in which the advent of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} took place in the light of New Testament prophecies. Similar prophecies exist regarding his advent in the Holy Qur'an, the *Hadith* literature and in the holy books of other religions. However, it is intended to deal with these Islamic and other prophecies in a separate volume. The present work focuses entirely on New Testament prophecies and their fulfilment during the past two hundred years.

As we shall see in the following pages, the time of the Promised Messiah's advent coincides with some very unusual events taking place in the world. These events include not only the New Testament prophecies regarding wars, famines, pestilences and earthquakes, but also advancements in the areas of communication, transportation, medicine and human convenience. Very rapid progress in the fields of science and technology that has taken place during and after his advent has brought the people of the world together and bridged the gaps in terms of physical distances, cultural barriers and linguistic obstacles. As the reader shall see, the time of his appearance was truly a very unusual period in the history of our world.

Beginning with the start of the second millennium and right up to the time of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's birth, the land of India saw the appearance of numerous scholars, mystics and Sufis that did much to transform the otherwise predominantly Hindu subcontinent into one with a sizeable Muslim population. The appearance of these men of God in India during the second millennium was so

¹ "Traditions" or "*Sunna and Hadith*" of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa} include his actions and his sayings, as remembered by his contemporaries and put into writing by later generations of scholars.

frequent and widespread that one cannot escape the observation that the land of India was being *prepared* for the appearance of someone special. Moreover, the political conditions in India at the time of his coming were very helpful for the propagation of his message and providing peace and security to his nascent movement.

The writer has benefited greatly from informal discussions with several persons. Their assistance in the preparation of this book is appreciatively acknowledged. Several persons have reviewed the book and helped in removing mistakes and improving the general content. In this context, I would particularly like to extend my gratitude to: Maulana Hafiz Mujeeb Ahmad sahib and Maulana Imtiaz Sra sahib of Canada; Abdul Wahab Mirza sahib and Naseer Habib sahib of Wakalat-e Tasneef London; and Syed Mubashar Ahmad Ayyaz sahib of the Research Cell in Rabwah. All these reviews would not have been possible without the efforts and guidance of Sheikh Abdul Wadood sahib, National Secretary Isha‘at, Canada and Muniruddin Shams sahib, Additional Wakil at-Tasneef, London, to whom the writer is much obliged. Any errors or omissions that remain are the sole responsibility of the writer.

Please note that English renderings of the Qur’anic verses is from the translation of Maulawi Sher ‘Alī^{ra}. English translation of the revelations of the Promised Messiah^{as} is from the English edition of *Tadhkira*. Several renderings of the Urdu and Persian verses of the Promised Messiah^{as} and some of his excerpts are from the various volumes of *The Essence of Islam* and other published sources. Where no previous English translation was available, the renderings have been carried out by the present writer.

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Mississauga, Ontario, Canada
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INTRODUCTION

Many religions of the world—including the three Abrahamic faiths of Judaism, Christianity and Islam—speak of conditions and circumstances that are expected to prevail in the Latter Days. This future period is called by several names such as “End of Time”, “Last Days” or “Final Days”. In the field of religion, the part of theology that deals with the final events of history and the ultimate destiny of humanity is known as Eschatology.

In Judaism, the term “End of Time” is synonymous with the appearance of the Messiah² and the gathering of the Jewish people from the Diaspora³.

In Christianity, the concept of Latter Days is associated with a period of tribulations prior to the return of Jesus Christ^{as}. In Christian theology, the Latter Days are also marked by the occurrence of wars, earthquakes, famines and pestilences; the darkening of the sun and the moon; and the falling of stars from heaven. In addition, the Latter Days are to be preceded by the appearance of false Messiahs and Prophets.

In the religion of Islam, the Latter Days are the time for the descent of the Mahdi, the appearance of Isa^{as} ibn Maryam⁴, the emergence of the *Dajjal*⁵, and the final supremacy of Islam over other faiths.

² In Hebrew, the word *Mashiah* (also written as *Mashiach*, *Moshiach* or *Messiah*) literally means an “anointed one” and has been used in the Old Testament for various kings and prophets. In the Book of Daniel (Daniel 9:25), the word Messiah is used specifically for a future prophet who will appear among the Israelites from the line of David. Several other Old Testament references, without using the word Messiah, refer to this person as a liberator and deliverer of the Jewish people. The Christians and the Muslims believe that the appearance of Jesus^{as}, son of Mary, fulfilled this Old Testament prophecy. The word “Christ” is the Greek rendering of the word “Messiah”.

³ The Diaspora in the case of the Jews refers to their exile or dispersion from their ancestral homeland and their settling down in other parts of the world.

⁴ Literally meaning “Jesus, son of Mary”. According to a Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa}, the Mahdi and Isa^{as} ibn Maryam are the same person.

⁵ In the Arabic language, the word *Dajjal* means “deceiver” or “liar”. In Islamic theology, the appearance of *al-Masih-ud-Dajjal*, meaning the “false Messiah” or Antichrist, is considered to be the most dangerous sign of the Latter Days.

Similar end time prophecies exist in other religions such as Zoroastrianism, Hinduism and Buddhism.

Long before Islam echoed the same concept, the early Christians believed in the Second Coming of Jesus Christ^{as}. In the Greek language, this theological belief of the Christians was called *Parousia* (Greek: παρουσία). The ancient Greek word means “presence”, “arrival”, “advent”, or “official visit”, of an important person. In the Gospels⁶, Jesus^{as} speaks of his own return several times and describes the end-time conditions that would prevail in those days. Most of the prophetic accounts of the Second Coming are given in Chapter 24 of the Gospel of Matthew. However, similar accounts occur in other books of the New Testament as well.

To the Christians, Jesus^{as} died on the cross and after his resurrection, ascended to heaven where he remains until his return to this world. Majority of the Christians, as well as most Muslims, expect the ancient Jesus^{as}, son of Mary, to appear personally in the Latter Days. While most Christians take a literal view of Jesus’ return, there is, however, a minority of Christians who view the second coming in a non-literal and spiritual sense. This viewpoint⁷ denies a bodily and personal return of Jesus^{as} to the earth in the Latter Days.

According to the majority of Muslims, Jesus^{as} was never put on the cross but someone with his likeness was crucified instead. After rapid Islamisation in the seventh century CE of the people of Syria, Egypt and part of Turkey, some of the typically Christian beliefs also pervaded the Muslim communities. One such notion that came through the early converts from Christianity was the physical ascension of Jesus Christ^{as} to heaven *prior* to his crucifixion. One influential scholar of the Gospels who was responsible for propagating this particular belief was an Alexandrian

⁶ The Gospels include the first four books of the New Testament that describe the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. These four accounts are by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

⁷ This view is summarised by Walvoord as follows: “A common modern view of the Lord’s return is the so called spiritual view which identifies the coming of Christ as a perpetual advance of Christ in the Church that includes many particular events.” [John F. Walvoord, *The Millennial Issue in Modern Theology*, Bibliotheca Sacra, 106:44, January, 1948—as reproduced by J. Dwight Pentecost in, *Things to Come, Study in Biblical Eschatology*, published by Zondervan, 1964, page 371].

Gnostic by the name of Basilides⁸ (d. 138 CE). He maintained that at the time of crucifixion, Jesus^{as} changed appearance with Simon of Cyrene who was compelled by the Romans to carry the cross. According to Basilides, it was Simon of Cyrene who was actually crucified in place of Jesus^{as}. A similar idea is presented in the *Second Treatise of the Great Seth*, a Gnostic Gospel that was discovered near the town of Nag Hammadi⁹ in 1945 and was dated to around the third century CE. The Gnostic text is part of twelve papyrus codices that were buried in a sealed jar. Their discovery has thrown considerable light on early Christianity and Gnosticism [Marvin Meyer and James M. Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures*, Harper One, 2007].

While the idea of a substitute did not gain much acceptance among the Christians themselves, it became quite popular among the medieval Muslims and was passed on to later generations. Thus, while both Christians and majority of Muslims believe that Jesus^{as} physically ascended to heaven, the timing of his ascension is considered differently between the two groups. According to the Christians, he ascended to heaven *after* his crucifixion while according to majority of the Muslims, he ascended to heaven *before* the event of crucifixion when someone else took his place on the cross.

In the context of Jesus' crucifixion and ascension, the Ahmadi Muslims hold a completely different view. According to them, Jesus^{as} was indeed put on the cross but did not die on it. Thus, he did not suffer the accursed death of one crucified¹⁰. Although he *appeared* to be dead to the Roman soldiers, he was in fact taken down alive, though in a state of unconsciousness. This scenario is consistent with Gospel accounts of the event.

⁸ Basilides is reported to have taught from 117 to 138 CE and claimed that he had inherited his knowledge from Matthew. He was a pupil of either Menander or Glaucias. It is also reported that he taught among the people of Persia for some time. A movement formed by his followers—known as Basilidians—lasted for a couple of centuries after his death. [Hort, Fenton John Anthony, 1911, *Basilides, Gnostic sect founder*, In Wace, Henry; Piercy, William C., *Dictionary of Christian Biography and Literature to the End of the Sixth Century* (third ed.), John Murray, London].

⁹ Nag Hammadi is a small town in Upper Egypt, on the west bank of the River Nile, some 80 km northwest of Luxor.

¹⁰ "...for he that is hanged is accursed of God;" Deuteronomy 21:23

Modern research on the subject of Jesus^{as} is trying to unravel the following mysteries:

- Who were the Lost Tribes of Israel and where did they live?
- How could Jesus^{as} have died so quickly after being hung on the cross only for a few hours?
- Was it possible for Jesus^{as} to have survived the punishment of crucifixion?
- Historically speaking, is there any evidence that Jesus^{as} did not perish on the cross?
- Is there any evidence for the presence of Jesus^{as} in India?
- Why do similarities exist between the teachings of Buddha^{as} and Jesus Christ^{as}?
- Is anything known about the place of his burial?
- What is common between the teachings of Buddha^{as} and Jesus^{as}?

Some of the modern scholars and their works that have focused on answering the above questions are given below in a chronological order:

- Bernier, Francois (*Travels in the Moughal Empire*, 1670),
- William Stroud (*The Physical Cause of the Death of Christ*, 1871),
- Notovich, Nikolai (*The Unknown Life of Jesus Christ*, 1894),
- Ahmad, Mirza Ghulam (*Jesus in India*, 1899¹¹),
- Edmunds, A.J. (*Buddhist and Christian Gospels Now First Compared*, volumes 1 & 2, 1902),
- Streeter, B.H. (*The Buddha and the Christ*, 1932),
- Kehimkar, Haeem Samuel (*The History of the Bene Israel of India*, 1937),
- Ahmad, Khwaja Nazir (*Jesus in Heaven on Earth*, 1952),
- Kurt Berna (*Christ did not Perish on the Cross*, 1967),
- Aziz Kashmiri (*Christ in Kashmir*, 1973),

¹¹ The publisher's note (page v) at the beginning of the book states: "Written in 1899, and partly serialized in *Review of Religions* in 1902 and 1903, the book itself was posthumously published on 20th November 1908."

- A. Faiber-Kaiser (*Jesus Died in Kashmir: Jesus, Moses and the Ten Lost Tribes*, 1976),
- Khan, Muhammad Zafrulla (*Deliverance from the Cross*, 1978),
- Janet Bock (*The Jesus Mystery—Of Lost Years and Unknown Travels*, 1980),
- Elizabeth Claire Prophet (*The Lost Years of Jesus: On the Discoveries of Notovitch*, 1984),
- Kersten, Holger (*Jesus Lived in India: His Unknown Life Before and After Crucifixion*, 1986),
- Nickerson, William (*Did Jesus Survive the Cross*, 1989),
- Barbara Thiering (*Jesus the Man: A New Interpretation from the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 1992),
- Aziz A. Chaudhry (*Jesus Among the Lost Sheep*, 1992),
- Thundy, Z.P. (*Buddha and Christ*, 1993),
- Fida Hasnain (*A Search for the Historical Jesus*, 1994),
- Gruber, E.R. & Kersten, Holger, *The Original Jesus: The Buddhist Sources of Christianity*, 1995),
- Benjamin, Joshua M. (*Mystery of Israel's Ten Lost Tribes and the Legend of Jesus in India*, 2001),
- Fida Hasnain (*The Fifth Gospel: New Evidence from the Tibetan, Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian and Urdu Sources..* 2006),
- Suzanne Olsson (*Jesus in Kashmir, the Lost Tribes*, 2007), and
- Blana Med Pa (*An Eyewitness Account: Jesus Did Not Die on the Cross*, 2010).

On the basis of modern research it appears that after recovering from his wounds, Jesus^{as} left Palestine in search of the Lost Tribes of Israel that had been exiled to Mesopotamia and unto whom he had been appointed¹². Several books have dealt with the subject of the Lost Tribes and their presence in Afghanistan and Kashmir. Modern day research has shown the presence of Israelite graves in Kashmir and a particular tomb in Srinagar is believed to be that of a foreign prophet by the name of Yuz Asaf. The word

¹² “But he [Jesus] answered and said, ‘I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.’” Matthew 15:24

“Yuz” is either an abbreviated form or a corrupted form of the word “Yasu”; and “Asaf” is the name of Jesus according to the Gospels and means someone who seeks and gathers the various tribes of the Jews.¹³

The presence of Jesus^{as} in India is also supported by the works of several scholars who have found parallels between his teachings and those of Mahatama Buddha^{as}, the sixth century BCE prophet who lived in India.

According to Ahmadi Muslims, Jesus^{as} eventually passed away—like all other prophets and people before him. Thus, the prophecy of Jesus’ return could only be fulfilled in a metaphoric sense with the appearance of a person who embodied such attributes that resembled the ancient prophet. The metaphoric appearance of Jesus^{as} among the Latter Day Muslims is very similar to the metaphoric appearance of Elijah^{as} among the Jews of Jesus’ time. It was common belief among the Jews that the ninth-century BCE prophet, Elijah^{as}, would *return* prior to the birth of the Messiah. It states in the book of Malachi, the last book of the Old Testament:

Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.
(Malachi 4:5)

Subsequently, when the people asked Jesus^{as} that Elijah^{as} was to come prior to him, he pointed to John the Baptist^{as}—who was born in 3 BCE and was a contemporary of Jesus^{as}. As it states in the Gospel of Matthew:

And his disciples asked him, saying, “Why then say the scribes that Elijah must first come?”

And Jesus answered and said unto them, “Elijah truly shall first come, and restore all things.

“But I say unto you, that Elijah is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of Man suffer of them.”

Then the disciples understood that he spoke unto them of John the Baptist. (Matthew 17:10-13)

¹³ *Tohfai Golarhviyya*, page 100, in *Ruhani Khazain*, volume 17.

The reference that John the Baptist came only in the spirit of Elijah also appears in the Gospel of Luke:

And he (John the Baptist) shall go before him (Jesus Christ) in the spirit and power of Elias... (Luke 1:17)

According to Ahmadi Muslims, just as John the Baptist^{as} represented the metaphoric return of the Prophet Elijah^{as}, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} of Qadian, India, represents the metaphoric return of the Prophet Jesus^{as}.

The ascent of Jesus^{as} to heaven, as mentioned in the Gospels, appears to have been added later on as some older versions do not mention it. Ascension stories were common at the time of Jesus^{as} in the Roman and Jewish religions and were intended to show superhuman powers of the individual. They also conformed to the concept of heaven that was prevalent in that period, it being a separate and higher place from earth. Today, Jesus' ascension has become a liability for the Christian faith as expressed by James Douglas Grant Dunn (1939-Present), the British New Testament scholar and Emeritus Lightfoot Professor at the Department of Theology at the University of Durham. He considers the ascensions as a puzzle and an embarrassment in the present age.¹⁴ Thus, if Jesus^{as} did not ascend to heaven physically, his return can only take place in a metaphoric sense. This is the viewpoint expressed by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, the Promised Messiah.

The purpose of writing this brief book is to demonstrate that the New Testament prophecies concerning the return of Jesus Christ^{as} have been fulfilled with the advent of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} as the returning Messiah. In addition, the end-time circumstances described in the New Testament bear a remarkable similarity with the conditions and state of affairs during the second half of the nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth century.

¹⁴ Seim, Turid Karsen (2009), *The Resurrected Body in Luke-Acts: The Significance of Space*. In Seim, Kurid Karlsen; Okland, Jorunn. *Metamorphoses: Resurrection, Body and Transformative Practices in Early Christianity*. Walter Trueter. ISBN 9783110202991.

Based on the false notion that Jesus^{as} had physically ascended to heaven, most Muslims applied the prophecies of his return to the ancient Jesus^{as} himself. This was perhaps the single most important obstacle for the contemporaries of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} to accept him as the returning Messiah^{as} as the people of his time were awaiting the return of the ancient prophet himself.

The early Christians as well as early Muslims expected the End of Times to be established rather imminently. In the case of Christianity, the End Times were to come before the first Christian generation had passed away and in the case of early Islam, the End Times were expected to come within one hundred years of the Holy Prophet's demise. However, to most modern scholars, both Christian as well as Muslim, the "End Times" represent a period—perhaps fairly extended—over which Biblical and Islamic prophecies were to be fulfilled. Likewise, while many early Christian and Muslim scholars considered End Times to be synonymous with the physical end of the world, the more widely accepted understanding today is that End Times likely refer to the end of a specific period or era in the history of our world.

This book is primarily devoted to the discussion of End Time prophecies mentioned in the New Testament and their fulfilment with the advent of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} as the returning Messiah^{as}. However, there are many other aspects that make the Latter Days very special in the history of our world. These aspects relate to the preparation of the land of India prior to the advent of the Promised Messiah^{as} and the occurrence of numerous scientific inventions and discoveries. Although these aspects are not prophesied *per se* in the New Testament, they are, nevertheless, very unusual in many ways and are discussed in a separate chapter towards the end of the book.

In the context of Jesus' return, several questions arise that also need to be answered. For example, why is it that of all the prophets in history, it is Jesus Christ^{as} who was to return in the Latter Days? As well, what is special about the Latter Days that a need for a prophet existed at all? These and some other questions are dealt with in the last chapter of the book.

Note that all Biblical and New Testament references given in this book are from *The Holy Bible*, King James Version, translated in 1611 CE, published by the British Foreign Bible Society, England.

NEW TESTAMENT PROPHECIES AND RETURN OF JESUS CHRIST^{as}

وقت تھا وقتِ مسیحا نہ کسی اور کا وقت
میں نہ آتا تو کوئی اور ہی آیا ہوتا

It was the time for the Messiah—not the time for anyone else;
If I had not come, someone else would have appeared!

(Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah^{as})

Chapter 1

OVERVIEW OF NEW TESTAMENT PROPHECIES

WHAT IS NEW TESTAMENT?

The Old and New Testaments form part of the Christian Bible. The Old Testament covers the historic period from the birth of Adam until about the middle of the fifth century BCE or the time of the Prophet Malachi. The New Testament by comparison discusses only the teachings of Jesus Christ^{as} and events of the first century Christianity. Together, the Old Testament and the New Testament form the Scriptures of the Christian faith.

The New Testament is a collection of various books that were written in the Koine Greek language. The Koine or “Common” Greek language was the lingua franca of the Mediterranean region during the ancient Roman and Greek periods and the early Byzantine period. The twenty-seven books of the New Testament include:

- Four *Gospels*¹⁵ (meaning “good news”) that narrate the life and teachings of Jesus^{as};
- A narrative of the Apostles’ ministries known as “*Acts of the Apostles*”¹⁶;
- Twenty-one “*Epistles*” or letters written by various authors; and
- A book of “*Revelation*” which consists of prophecies.

¹⁵ The four Gospels were written by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

¹⁶ The Apostles were the disciples and closest followers of Jesus^{as} and the primary teachers of his message to the people.

PROPHECIES REGARDING JESUS' RETURN

There are nearly twenty references in the New Testament regarding the return of Jesus Christ^{as}. No other prophet in history has emphasised his own return as much as Jesus^{as} has done. Following are some of these prophecies made directly by Jesus^{as} or by the Apostles following him. Note that bolding of the text is by the present writer.

For I say unto you, 'Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, **Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.**' (Matthew 23:39)

And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, 'Tell us, when shall these things be? And **what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?**' (Matthew 24:3)

Blessed is that servant, whom **his lord when he cometh** shall find so doing. (Matthew 25:46)

And **then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.** (Mark 13:26)

Nevertheless **when the Son of man cometh**, shall he find faith on the earth? (Luke 18:8)

'I will not leave you comfortless; **I will come to you.**' (John 14:18)

"Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? **This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.**" (Acts 1:11)

And **He shall send Jesus Christ**, which before was preached unto you;
Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things... (Acts 3:20-21)

“**After this I will return**, and will build again the tabernacle¹⁷ of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up:

“That the residue of men might seek after the Lord...” (Acts 15:16-17)

For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord’s death **till he come**.

(1 Corinthians 11:26)

When Christ, who is our life, **shall appear**, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Colossians 3:4

And to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead... (1 Thessalonians 1:10)

And to you who are troubled rest with us, **when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels...** (2Thessalonians 1:7)

That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, **until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ**. (1 Timothy 6:14)

So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; **and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time** without sin unto salvation. (Hebrews 9:28)

Be patient therefore, brethren, **unto the coming of the Lord....**

Be ye also patient; establish your hearts; **for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh**. (James 5:7-8)

And now, little children, abide in him; that, **when he shall appear**, we may have confidence... (1 John 2:28)

... **when he shall appear**, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. (1 John 3:2)

“**Behold, I come quickly...**”

¹⁷ The Tabernacle (literally meaning “residence” or “dwelling place”) was a portable tent-like structure used by the Jews as the meeting place of God with the Children of Israel.

(Revelation, 3:11; also 22:12)

He which testifieth these things saith, ‘**Surely I come quickly.**’
(Revelation 22:20)

PROPHECIES REGARDING END TIME CONDITIONS

In the New Testament, Jesus Christ^{as} describes to his disciples the signs of his return and the conditions related to the End of Time. The end of the world should be taken here as the end of a specific period or era after which the world would enter a new phase or epoch. The majority of these end time prophecies are limited to the Gospels, particularly that of Matthew. Note that bolding of the text in the references below is by the present writer. All references are taken from the King James translation of 1611 CE.

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

Ye shall know them by their fruits... (Matthew 7:15-16)

And as he (Jesus) sat upon the mount Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, “Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?”

And Jesus answered and said unto them, “Take heed that no man deceive you.

“For **many shall come in my name**, saying, ‘I am Christ’ **and shall deceive many.**

“And ye shall hear of **wars and rumours of wars**: see that ye be not troubled: for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

“For **nation shall rise against nation**, and **kingdom against kingdom**: and there shall be **famines**, and **pestilences**, and **earthquakes**, in diverse places.

“All these are the **beginning of sorrows.**

“Then shall they **deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you**: and ye shall be **hated of all nations for my name’s sake.**

“And then **shall many be offended**, and shall betray one another, and **shall hate one another.**

“And **many false prophets shall rise**, and shall deceive many.

“And because **iniquity shall abound**, the love of many shall wax cold.

“But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

“And this **gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world** for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

“When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place (whoso readeth, let him understand)

“Then let them which be in Judaea **flee into the mountains**:

“Let him which is on the housetop **not come down to take any thing out of his house**:

“Neither let him which is in the field **return back to take his clothes**.

“And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

“But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day:

“For then shall be **great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time**, no, nor ever shall be.” (Matthew 24:3-21)

For **there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets**, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it *were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect. (Matthew 24:24)

For **as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west**; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.

Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall **the sun be darkened**, and the **moon shall not give her light**, and **the stars shall fall from heaven**, and **the powers of the heavens shall be shaken**.

And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the **Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory**.

And He shall send His angels with great sound of a trumpet, and **they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other**. (Matthew 24:27-31)

Verily I say unto you, **this generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled**.

• 24 • *Overview of New Testament Prophecies*

Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

But **of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.**

(Matthew 24:34-36)

Watch therefore, for **ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.**

(Matthew 25:23)

For **false Christs and false prophets shall rise**, and shall show signs and wonders, to seduce, if it *were* possible, even the elect. (Mark 13:22)

But in those days, **after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light,**

And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken. (Mark 13:24-25)

And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.

(Mark 13:27)

But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.

Take ye heed, watch and pray: **for ye know not when the time is.** (Mark 13:32-33)

For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day.

But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation.

And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. (Luke 17:24-26)

And they asked him, saying, “Master, but when shall these things be?”

And he said, “Take heed that ye be not deceived: for **many shall come in my name, saying, ‘I am Christ;’** and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them.

“But **when ye shall hear of wars and commotions**, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by.”

Then said he unto them, **“Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom:**

“And great earthquakes shall be in diverse places, and famines, and pestilences: and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.

“But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name’s sake.” (Luke 21:7-12)

And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring;

Men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: **for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.**

And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. (Luke 21:25-27)

Let no man deceive you by any means; for **that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first**, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

(2 Thessalonians 2:3)

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times **some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils:**

Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with hot iron;

(1 Timothy 4:1-2)

This know also, that in the last days, perilous times shall come.

For men shall be **lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parent, unthankful, unholy,**

Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

Traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away.

For this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with diverse lusts,

Ever learning, and **never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.**

Now as Jannes and Jambres¹⁸ withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: **men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.**

(2 Timothy 3:1-8)

For the time will come when **they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers,** having itching ears;

And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

(2 Timothy 4:3-4)

And when he had opened the fifth seal¹⁹, **I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:**

And they cried with a loud voice, saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?”

And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servant also and their brethren, that should be killed as they *were*, should be fulfilled.

And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, **there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;**

And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.

¹⁸ Jannes and Jambres were two Egyptian sorcerers in Israelite history around the time of the Exodus.

¹⁹ In the Book of Revelation of the New Testament, there is reference to Seven Seals that allude to seven symbolic seals that secure the book that John of Patmos (the author of “Revelation”) saw in a vision.

And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. (Revelation 6:9-14)

And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise. (Revelation 8:12)

The above verses of the New Testament prophesy the following events to take place in the Latter Days:

- Appearance of false Messiahs and prophets
- Wars and rumours of wars
- Famines
- Pestilences
- Earthquakes
- Darkening of the sun and moon
- Falling of stars
- Hate and killings
- Gospel preached in the entire world
- Gathering of God's elect
- Advent of Jesus^{as} in the East
- No one knows the time of advent
- End-time apostasy

Now, one by one, we shall take up the above prophecies and discuss as to how they have been fulfilled with the coming of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} of Qadian as the metaphoric return of the Messiah^{as}.

Chapter 2

APPEARANCE OF FALSE MESSIAHS

In the New Testament book of Matthew, Jesus^{as} tells his disciples about the coming of false prophets and Messiahs in the intervening period between his departure and eventual return in the Latter Days. Mark and Luke also echo the prophecy in their own Gospel accounts.

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

Ye shall know them by their fruits..."

(Matthew 7:15-16)

And Jesus answered and said unto them, "Take heed that no man deceive you.

"For **many shall come in my name**, saying, 'I am Christ' **and shall deceive many**." (Matthew 24:4-5)

And **many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many**. (Matthew 24:11)

For **there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets**, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it *were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect. (Matthew 24:24)

For **false Christs and false prophets shall rise**, and shall show signs and wonders, to seduce, if it *were* possible, even the elect. (Mark 13:22)

And he said, "Take heed that ye be not deceived; for **many shall come in my name, saying, 'I am Christ**;' and the time draweth near; go ye not therefore after them." (Luke 21:8)

Starting soon after the event of the crucifixion and well into the twentieth century, several people have claimed to be the very Messiah that was expected to come according to the prophecy of the New Testament. Some of these claimants simply exploited the credulity of the relatively ignorant masses for

their own selfish reasons. Others were victims of their own delusions. Many of these false claimants paid dearly with their lives in the course of their preaching. Others simply faded away in history

Following is a brief listing of some of the notable false claimants of prophethood and Messiahship that have appeared in the intervening period. Much of the material for this section is taken from an on-line article *Pseudo-Messiahs* by Kaufmann Kohler and H.G. Fiedmann and from Wikipedia.

In 44-46 CE, **Theudas**, a Jewish rebel, led a revolt against the Romans which was put down quickly. The well known Romano-Jewish historian, Flavius Josephus (37-100 CE), writes this about Theudas:

“It came to pass, while Cuspius Fadus was procurator of Judea, that a certain charlatan, whose name was Theudas, persuaded a great part of the people to take their effects with them, and follow him to the Jordan River; for he told them he was a prophet, and that he would, by his own command, divide the river, and afford them an easy passage over it. Many were deluded by his words. However, Fadus did not permit them to make any advantage of his wild attempt, but sent a troop of horsemen out against them. After falling upon them unexpectedly, they slew many of them, and took many of them alive. They also took Theudas alive, cut off his head, and carried it to Jerusalem.” (*Antiquities of the Jews* 20.97-98)

Menahem ben Judah was another claimant of Messiahship around the time of the first Jewish-Roman War of 66-73 CE. He is also mentioned by Josephus in his writings. Ben Judah took part in several raids against the Romans but was killed as a result of a conspiracy against him.

Simon bar Kokhba (also spelled Cochba, Kosevah, Koseva). He died in 135 CE. He was the Jewish leader of a revolt known by his name against the Roman Empire in 132 CE for the purpose of establishing an independent Jewish state. The Jewish Rabbi, Akiva ben Yosef (40-137 CE) entertained the possibility that Kokhba was a Jewish Messiah and named him “Bar Kokhba” meaning “Son of the Star” based on the star prophecy in Numbers 24:17²⁰.

²⁰ “I shall see him, but not now. I shall behold him, but not nigh. There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.” Numbers 24:17.

Rabbi Akiva was a contributor to the *Mishnah*²¹ and *Midrash*²² and is called Rosh la-Hakhamim, “Chief of the Sages” in the Talmud²³. The Romans eventually ended the rebellion of Kokhba and by its conclusion, some three million Jews are said to have lost their lives.

Moses of Crete claimed to be a Messiah in the fifth century CE. Taking on the name of the ancient Israelite Prophet, he promised the Jewish people to lead them back to Israel after parting the waters and walking through the Mediterranean Sea. His followers left their possessions and attempted to walk through the sea, many of them drowning in the process and the rest being rescued. Moses of Crete himself disappeared.

In the eighth century CE, **Ishak ben Yakub** known as Abu Isa al-Isfahani claimed to be a Jewish Messiah and Prophet in Persia with a mandate to free Israel. He rebelled against the then Muslim Caliph, Marwan II (744-750 CE), and was defeated and slain.

Again in the eighth century CE, **Yudghan**, called Al-Rai (the Shepherd), claimed to be a prophet after the death of Abu Isa and was regarded as a Messiah by his followers.

A Syrian Christian by the name of **Serene** (also called Sherini, Sheria, Serenus, Zonoria, Saura and Severus) began preaching around 720-723 CE. This was the time when the Umayyad Khalifa, ‘Umar bin ‘Abdul ‘Aziz was reigning. Serene promised his followers that he would drive out the Muslims and restore the Holy Land to the Jews. He was eventually arrested and brought in front of the Khalifa Yazid II who handed him over to the Jews for punishment.

A number of Messiahs appeared during the twelfth century CE as a result of the Crusades. It is reported that one appeared in France around 1087 CE and

²¹ *Mishnah* is the compilation of Jewish oral traditions known as “Oral Torah”.

²² *Midrash* are the early commentaries by the rabbis on the Oral and Written Torah.

²³ The *Talmud* is the collection of Jewish civil and religious law. It includes the text (*Mishnah*) and commentaries (*Gemara*).

was slain by the French while another appeared in the province of Cordoba around 1117 CE.

Moses al-Dari is reported to have appeared in Morocco around 1127 CE claiming that he would free the Jews in the Almoravid lands²⁴.

David Alroy (or Alrui) appeared in Persia around 1160 CE and claimed to be a Messiah with a mandate to free the Jews from the Muslim yoke and to lead them back to Jerusalem. He instigated the Jews to rise up in rebellion and regain Amadiya²⁵. His campaign failed and he was assassinated. His followers formed a sect known as Menahemists after the Messianic name Menahem that was assumed by their leader.

A forerunner of the Yemenite Messiah appeared in Fez, Morocco, during the period when the Muslims were preaching to the Jews in that area. This pseudo Messiah was the subject of Maimonides' letter (known as Iggeret Teman) to Yemenite Jews. The false Messiah was arrested and beheaded.

Abraham ben Samuel Abulafia (1240-1291 CE) is the founder of the school of Prophetic Kabbalah²⁶. He believed himself to be a prophet. In Messina, on the island of Sicily, he is believed to have declared himself a

²⁴ Area ruled by the Almoravid dynasty of Morocco that included Maghreb (Northwest Africa, west of Egypt—including Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya) and Al-Andalus (Muslim Spain including present day Spain and Portugal).

²⁵ Amadiya is a town in the north of present-day Iraqi Kurdistan located at some 1,400 m elevation.

²⁶ Kabbalah is the ancient Jewish tradition of mystical interpretation of the Bible using esoteric methods. It reached the height of its influence in the later Middle Ages and is very significant in Hasidic Judaism. The esoteric teachings of Kabbalah are meant to explain the relationship between the eternal and mysterious Infinity of God and the mortal and finite universe that He has created. Kabbalah seeks to deal with such questions as the nature of the universe, the purpose of existence, the meaning of being, how do the properties of an object relate to the object itself, is existence a property, do physical properties actually exist, etc. Kabbalah as a study emerged in the 12th to 13th century CE in Southern France and Spain. It became popular as Hasidic Judaism since the 18th century. Beginning with the 20th century, Kabbalah has crossed denominational barriers and has achieved popularity even among non-Jewish adherents.

Messiah. He has written numerous books on Kabbalah and other mystical subjects. Nothing is known about his end. Two of his disciples—Joseph Gikatilla and Samuel, both from Medinaceli (in Spain)—later claimed to be prophets.

Another false prophet, **Nissim ben Abraham**, is reported to have been active in 1295 CE in Avila, Spain. Although illiterate, he claimed to have been suddenly endowed by an angel with the ability to write a mystical work, *The Wonder of Wisdom*, along with a commentary. He prophesied the appearance of the Messiah in 1295 CE with a large number of followers eagerly waiting on the said date.

Moses Botarel of Cisneros (Spain) was active around 1413 CE. He was a well-regarded scholar and a pupil of Jacob Sefardi who instructed him in the Kabbalah. He claimed that the Prophet Elijah had appeared unto him and appointed him as Messiah.

Asher Lammlein (also known as Asher Kay) claimed to be a forerunner of the Messiah around 1502 CE in Istria near Venice. He preached to the Jews to be penitent and practise charity so that the Messiah could appear within half a year. Following his advice, many Jews fasted, prayed and gave alms but the promised Messiah^{as} did not appear.

Sabbatai Zevi (1626-1676) was born in Smyrna (Izmir, Turkey) and was a Sephardic Rabbi who claimed to be a Messiah. He was the founder of the Sabbatean movement. He was one of the rather more successful false claimants and gathered a very sizable following around him. He was later arrested and converted to Islam, reportedly under threat of death by the Turkish Sultan.

After the death of Sabbatai Zevi, a follower of his by the name of **Mordecai Mokia** (1650-1729 CE) also claimed to be a Messiah and remained active during 1678-1683. After initial acceptance and later rejection by the people, he was reported to have gone insane.

Miguel Abraham Cardoso (1630-1706) was a follower of Sabbatai Zevi and declared himself to be a prophet of the Messiah. He claimed to have

dreams and visions. He tried to defend the conversion of Sabbatai Zevi as a necessary act by him to be reckoned among the sinners to atone for Israel's idolatry. He also prophesied the imminent return of the Messiah, fixing different dates, until his death. Cardoso wrote extensively including Kabbalistic and polemical subjects.

In eighteenth century, **Jacob Joseph Frank** (1726-1791) claimed to be a Messiah and the reincarnation of King David and the Prophet Joseph. He took on the title of *Santo Señor* (holy lord) and claimed to perform miracles. His followers prayed to him. The Jewish leaders in Poland excommunicated him due to his beliefs and deification of himself. In 1759, he and many of his followers converted to Christianity. The Catholic Church mistrusted his motives and imprisoned him as a heretic.

John Nicholas Thom (1799-1838) claimed to be the Saviour of the World and the reincarnation of Jesus Christ^{as}. He was eventually killed by British soldiers in Kent.

Arnold Potter (1804-1872) claimed that the spirit of Jesus Christ entered into his body and he became "Potter Christ" Son of the living God. Attempting to ascend into heaven, he jumped off a cliff and died.

Baha'ullah (1817-1892) was born a Shiite but adopted Babism in 1844. He claimed to be the fulfilment of the Promised One of three major religions. In 1863, he broke away from Shi'a Islam and founded a new religion called Baha'ism. He believed that he fulfilled the second coming of Jesus Christ^{as} in his own person and even wrote a letter to Pope Pius IX to this effect. In this letter, Baha'ullah wrote:

"He who is the lord of lords is come overshadowed with clouds... He, verily, hath again come down from Heaven even as he came down from it the first time. Beware that thou dispute not with him even as the Pharisees disputed with him without a clear token of proof." ²⁷

²⁷ Baha'ullah, *The Summons of the Lord of Hosts*, Baha'i World Centre, pp. 54-55.

In the nineteenth century, **Shukr ben Salim Kuhayl I** (1821-1865) claimed to be a Messiah. Initially, he claimed to be a messenger of the Messiah. He led the life of a humble and ascetic individual, wearing ragged clothes and isolating himself on Mount Tiyal. Later, he changed his station from the messenger of the Messiah to Messiah himself. He became quite accepted by the Jews of Yemen who believed in his messianic claims. In 1865, he was killed by local Arabs apparently at the direction of the Imam of San'a. However, some of his followers continued to believe that he shall return soon.

Soon after the death of Shukr Kuhayl, **Judah ben Shalom** (d. 1878), who was also known as Shukr Kuyal II, professed to be the Messiah. He also came from San'a, Yemen, and was a Kabbalist. He claimed to be the same Shukr Kuhayl I who had been killed through decapitation three years earlier. He gained a large following among the Jews who contributed generously to his financial demands. Some Jews, however, disparaged his excessive lifestyle that he maintained on the basis of his wealth. He also gained some following among the Arabs to whom he claimed to be the expected Mahdi. Through his well-prepared speeches and frequent references to messianic passages from the Scriptures, he greatly impressed the Jews of Yemen. His eventual fall came when the Rabbis in Jerusalem sent their Epistle to Yemenite Jews countering his messianic claims. His stature in the local community fell and the funds stopped flowing into his coffers. Consequently, he defaulted on his loans from the wealthy Arabs and was eventually sent to jail. Later, he was released from jail but died in poverty in 1878.

Moses Guibbory (1899-1985) was born in the Ukraine. After travelling first to Turkey and then to Jerusalem, he also claimed to be the Messiah. Some people followed him after he predicted a strong earthquake. Some additional titles that he took on included Lord of the Universe, the Last Incarnation of Jehovah, the Shepherd and New Moses. For his claims, he wrote an extensive commentary on the Scriptures. In 1943, he emigrated to the United States of America.

Chapter 3

WARS AND RUMOURS OF WARS

As narrated in the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus^{as} speaks of wars, rumours of wars and of nations rising against nations at the time of his return. The actual words go as follows:

And ye shall hear of **wars and rumours of wars**: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

For **nation shall rise against nation**, and **kingdom against kingdom**... (Matthew 24:6-7)

And when ye shall **hear of wars and rumours of wars**, be ye not troubled; for *such things* must need be; but the end *shall* not *be* yet.

For **nation shall rise against nation**, and **kingdom against kingdom**..." (Mark 13:7-8)

But **when ye shall hear of wars and commotion**, be not terrified; for these things must first come to pass; but the end *is* not by and by. (Luke 21:9)

Ever since Cain slew his brother, Abel, men have been fighting each other for various reasons. A "war" is a state of armed conflict between groups of people prompted by extreme aggression and involving considerable destruction and human mortality. Anthropologists have determined that signs of armed conflicts go as far back as 14,000 years ago as evidenced by Mesolithic²⁸ burial sites. Various researchers have estimated a figure of 0.5

²⁸ Mesolithic or Middle Stone Age lies between Palaeolithic and Neolithic periods. In the region of Eurasia, the archaeologists apply this term to the period between 10,000 and 5,000 BCE while in the Levant, the archaeologists apply this term to the period between 20,000 and 9,500 BCE.

Erikson, Gunilla; Lougas, Lembi; Zagorska, Ilga (2003), "Stone Age hunter-fisher-gatherers at Zvejnieki, northern Latvia". *Before Farming: The Archaeology and Anthropology of Hunter-Gatherers*.

billion to as high as 1.5 billion as the total war casualties in recorded human history²⁹. As most wars lead to secondary casualties through diseases, famines and forced migrations, the actual mortality caused by wars in history may be still higher.

Considering that human beings have always been warring with each other, what particular significance could be attached to Jesus' words that his return would take place when "**Ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars**"? In other words, what would be special about these particular wars during his advent? The answer to this question is explained below.

The latter half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century—that coincide broadly with the advent of the Promised Messiah^{as}—were truly periods of great warfare and fighting.

Just prior to the birth of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, two major wars had taken place in the early part of the nineteenth century. These included the Napoleonic Wars in Europe and the Shaka's Conquests in Africa.

In the Napoleonic Wars³⁰, the French Empire fought against various European coalitions during 1803-1815. In a way, these conflicts were the continuation of the revolutionary wars dating back to 1792 at the time of the French Revolution. It is estimated that these Napoleonic Wars resulted in casualties of some 5.3 million French and French allies and some 2.0 million European allies fighting against the French Empire.

In South Africa, conquests carried out by Shaka Zulu (1787-1828) during a twelve-year period from 1816 to 1828 caused the death of some 2.0 million persons.

S.V. Oshibkina, in *Anthropology & Archeology of Eurasia*, vol. 46, no. 4, (spring 2008), pp. 46-70.

²⁹ *What Every Person Should Know About War*, by Chris Hedges, in *New York Post*, July 6, 2003.

³⁰ Data on war casualties presented in the text and various tables in this book is taken from many sources on War Casualties in Human History. They are too numerous to mention individually. References can be accessed easily under the above subject given in Wikipedia.org; Warhistoryonline.com; Wonderslist.com; Listverse.com; List25.com/25-deadliest-wars-in-human-history. There is a reasonably good agreement on the casualty figures among the various references.

Another significant conflict that started in 1817 but continued well during the early life of the Promised Messiah^{as} includes the Circassian³¹ War of 1817-1867 in which some 0.4–1.5 million persons of North Caucasus region lost their lives.

WARS DURING THE LIFE OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH^{AS}

Several armed conflicts took place during the lifetime of the Promised Messiah^{as} from 1835 to 1908. Below is a brief chronological list of only those wars and battles that took the lives of at least 100,000 persons or more in each case. Total war casualties in this period amounted to around 50 to 100 million persons.

Table-1
War Casualties during the life time of the Promised Messiah^{as}

Period	War / Battle	Remarks	Casualties
1850-1864	Taiping Rebellion	Civil war in China fought between the Manchu and Qing dynasties	20 to 70 million
1853-1856	Crimean War	War in which the alliance of France, Great Britain, the Ottoman Empire and Sardinia defeated Russia.	0.4 million
1856-1873	Du Wenxin Rebellion	Rebellion by the Chinese Muslims during the Qing dynasty.	1.0 million
1857	Indian Rebellion of 1857	Rebellion against the rule of the British East India Company initiated by a mutiny of the sepoys.	0.1 million
1861-1865	American Civil War	The American Union fought secessionists in eleven states grouped as Confederate States of America.	0.9 1.0 million
1862-1877	Dungan Revolt	An uprising in China by the Hui and other Muslim groups.	20.8 million

³¹ Circassians are a Northwest Caucasian ethnic group native to Circassia — a historical country in North Caucasus and along the northeast shore of the Black Sea.

1864-1870	War of the Triple Alliance	War between Paraguay and the triple alliance of Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay.	0.4 million
1873-1914	Aceh War	Rebellion by the Sultanate of Aceh in Indonesia against the ruling Netherlands.	0.1 million
1881-1889	Mahdist War	A British colonial war fought initially between the Sudanese Mahdi and the Khedivate of Egypt (Ottoman State in Egypt) and later with the British.	0.1 million
1885-1908	Congo Genocide	Genocide of the Congo people by the Belgian regime.	3 – 10 million
1894-1896	Hamidian Massacres	Genocide of people of Armenian descent by the Ottoman rule.	0.2 million
1899-1902	Thousand Days' War	Armed conflict in the Republic of Columbia between the Conservative and Liberal Parties.	0.1 million
1899-1912	Philippine-American War	Armed conflict between the First Philippine Republic and the United States	0.2 million
1905	Battle of Mukden	Armed conflict between Russia and Japan.	0.2 million

WARS AFTER THE PROMISED MESSIAH^{AS}

The century following the death of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} proved to be one of the deadliest—if not *the* deadliest—period in human history in terms of armed conflicts and loss of life. It is estimated that some 140–185 million persons lost their lives in the battlefields. There is no other 100-year period in known history that is deadlier than this. The two World Wars alone caused the loss of some 60–105 million persons. The Table below lists only those conflicts in which at least 100,000 persons lost their lives.

Table-2
War Casualties after the demise of the Promised Messiah^{as}

Period	War / Battle	Remarks	Casualties
1910-1920	Mexican Revolution	An armed struggle to oppose the results of a rigged presidential election.	1.0 – 2.0 million
1914-1918	World War I	Global war originating in Europe in which 70 million people fought.	20 million
1915-1918	Greek Genocide	Genocide of Greeks under the Ottoman rule.	0.6 million
1915-1923	Armenian Genocide	Genocide of Armenians under the Ottoman rule.	1.2 million
1915-1923	Assyrian Genocide	Genocide of Assyrians under the Ottoman rule.	0.5 million
1917-1922	Russian Civil War	Civil war immediately after the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917.	7 – 12 million
1918-2003	Iraq-Kurdish Conflict	Long lasting armed conflict between the Kurdish freedom fighters and the Government of Iraq.	0.1 – 0.3 million
1919-1920	Decossackization	Genocide of Cossacks in the Soviet Union following the October Revolution of 1919-1920.	0.4 million
1920	Battle of Warsaw	Armed conflict between Poland and Soviet Union.	0.1 million
1920-Present	Arab-Israeli Conflict	Historic conflict between the two groups due to the rise of Zionism and Arab nationalism.	0.1 million
1927-1949	Chinese Civil War	Civil war between Kuomintang (Republic of China) and Communist Party of China	8.0 million
1932-1933	Holodomor Genocide	Genocide of Soviet ethnic groups through a deliberate famine.	4.5 million
1936-1939	Spanish Civil War	Fought between the Republicans and the Nationalists led by General Francisco Franco.	0.5 million
1937-1938	Nanking Massacre	Massacre of Nanking Chinese by the Japanese troops.	0.4 million
1937-1945	Second Sino Japanese War	Initially a conflict between China and Japan, the SSJ war merged with World War II.	25 million
1939-1945	World War II	A global war involving a vast majority of nations. Most widespread war in history involving 100 million people from 30	50 – 85 million

		countries.	
1941-1945	Ustasha Genocide	Genocide of Serbs, Jews and Romas in Yugoslavia.	0.2 million
1943-1944	Volhynia Massacre	Genocide of Poles by the Ukrainians in eastern Polish territories.	1.3 million
1946-1954	First Indochina War	War between French forces and Viet Minh opponents.	0.4 million
1947-Present	Kashmir Conflict	Territorial conflict between India and Pakistan after the 1947 partition of the subcontinent.	0.1 million
1948	Siege of Changehun	In China.	0.4 million
1948-Present	Internal Conflict in Myanmar	A series of conflicts after Myanmar (Burma) gained independence.	0.1 – 0.3 million
1950-1953	Korean War	North Korea invaded South Korea. Former helped by China with the latter helped by the U.S.	1.2 million
1954-1962	Algerian War of Independence	Known as Algerian Revolution, the war was fought between France and the Algerian National Liberation Front.	0.4 – 1.5 million
1955-1975	Vietnam War (2nd Indochina War)	Resistance war against America fought between North and South Vietnam.	0.8 – 3.8 million
1962-1970	North Yemen Civil War	Conflict between the supporters of the Mutawakkilite Kingdom and the supporters of the Yemen Arab Republic.	0.1 million
1962-1996	Mayan Massacre	Massacre of Mayans of Guatemala during the Civil War.	0.1 million
1964-Present	Colombian Conflict	A war among the Colombian Government, paramilitary groups, crime syndicates and Left Wing Guerrillas (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia; National Liberation Army) fighting for increased influence.	0.2 million

1964-1974	Mozambican War of Independence	An armed conflict between the guerrilla forces of the Mozambique Liberation Front and Portugal.	0.1 million
1965-1966	Indonesian Massacre	Massacre of ethnic Chinese following the failed coup against the government of Indonesia.	1.2 million
1967-1970	Biafra War	Nigerian civil war to counter the secession of Biafra from Nigeria	1.0 million
1969-Present	Islamic Insurgency in the Philippines	Moro Conflict in the Mindanao region involving the Moro Muslims and the Government.	0.1 million
1971	Bangladesh Liberation War	The war of independence sparked by nationalist movement and 1971 Bangladesh genocide.	2 – 3 million
1972	Burundi Massacre	Massacre of Hutus by the Tutsi in Burundi.	0.1 million
1974-1991	Ethiopian Civil War	Initiated by a coup by Marxists against Emperor Haile Selassie.	0.5 – 1.5 million
1975-1990	Lebanese Civil War	A multifaceted civil war involving Sunnis, Shi'as, Christians and various political parties.	0.2 million
1975-1999	Indonesian Occupation of East Timor	Illegal occupation of East Timor by Indonesia.	0.2 million
1975-2007	Insurgency in Laos	After the abolition of monarchy and the proclamation of the communist People's Democratic Republic, numerous conflicts have occurred against the government.	0.1 million
1977-1978	Ethiopian Red Terror	Massacre of people of Ethiopia and Eritrea under the Ethiopian rule.	0.2 million
1979-1989	Soviet War in Afghanistan	War between the Soviet troops and Afghan freedom fighters.	1.0 – 1.6 million
1980-1988	Iran-Iraq War	Iraq invaded Iran after a long history of border disputes.	1.0 million
1981-1986	Ugandan Bush War	A civil war waged by the National Resistance Army against the government of Milton Obote and, later, that of Tito Okello.	0.1 million
1983-2009	Sri Lankan Civil War	Armed conflict by the Tamil Liberation Tigers against the Government to gain an independent Tamil state.	0.1 million

1984	Western New Guinea Genocide	Genocide of ethnic Irianese people in West Irian by Indonesia.	0.1 million
1986-Present	Somali Civil War	Civil war in which various ethnic groups fought against the Somali Armed Forces and overthrew the government of Siad Barre.	0.3 – 0.5 million
1986-1989	Al-Anfal Genocide	Genocide of Kurdish people by the Ba'athist regime of Saddam Hussein.	0.1 million
1987-Present	Lord's Resistance Army insurgency	Guerrilla campaign waged by LRA led by Joseph Kony to establish theocratic government in Uganda, DRC and Central African Republic.	0.2 – 0.5 million
1989-1992	Civil War in Afghanistan.	War between the Communist regime and Mujahedeen after the withdrawal of Soviet Union.	0.4 million
1991	1991 Uprising in Iraq	Uprisings in northern and southern Iraq after the April 1991 cease fire of the Gulf War.	0.1 million
1991-1995	Bosnian War	Armed conflicts between the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina on one side and several self-proclaimed entities.	0.1 million
1991-2002	Algerian Civil War	Armed conflict between the Algerian Government and various Islamic rebel groups.	0.2 million
1993-2005	Second Burundian Civil War	Fought between the Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups.	0.3 million
1994	Rwanda Genocide	Massacre of Rwanda people.	0.7 million
1998-2003	Second Congo War	Took place in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.	2.5 – 5.4 million
2001-Present	War on Terror	A war started by Bush administration against terror groups worldwide after the September 11 attacks.	0.3 – 1.3 million
2003-2011	Iraq War	War between Iraq and the US after the former's invasion of Kuwait.	0.2 – 1.1 million
2003-Present	War in Darfur	War in the Darfur region of Sudan between the Government of Sudan and rebel groups including Sudan Liberation Movement and Justice and Equality Movement.	0.2 – 0.5 million

2006-Present	Mexican Drug War	Armed conflicts between the Mexican Government and the various drug trafficking syndicates.	0.1 million
2011-Present	Syrian Civil War	Ongoing multi-sided armed conflict in Syria among the regime of Bashar Asad, the rebels and the fundamentalists.	0.5 million

The prophecy of Matthew 24:6-7 has been fulfilled to the letter by the intense armed conflicts of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The two World Wars (of 1914-1918 and 1939-1945), fulfilled the very words of Matthew 24:7 that “... **nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom...**” These two deadly conflicts involved a large number of world’s nations thereby earning the moniker of “World Wars”.

In 1905, the Promised Messiah^{as} himself warned of a great calamity to strike humanity very soon. In the tradition of other reformers and prophets before him, the Promised Messiah^{as} repeatedly warned the people as to the consequence of his rejection and their continued erring ways. In this respect, his prose as well as his poetry makes numerous mentions of fatal epidemics, earthquakes, bloodshed and other afflictions that could visit humanity. However, close to the end of his life—in the years 1905 to 1908—he made very specific warnings about a great calamity that was about to befall as a direct result of the continued immorality of the peoples. His poems: *Prophecy of a Great Earthquake*, *Warnings*, *Warnings and Good News*, *Hymns and Preaching of Truth*, and *Prophecy of a Great War*, make particular mention of such impending catastrophes. Some selected couplets are quoted below from *Durr-e Samīn*—the collection of his Urdu poetry:

A sign will appear some days from now,
Which shall devastate country and town and meadow.
So suddenly will people be seized by Divine wrath,
An undressed person will have no time to secure his loincloth.
They shall all be suddenly shaken by the earthquake;
Be it men, or trees, or rocks, or oceans.
In the twinkling of an eye the earth will be thrown upside down,
Blood will flow like in streams.

Those whose night garments were white as Jasmine,
Will wake up in the morning clad in red.
Men and animals will lose their senses,
And pigeons and nightingales will forget their songs.
That hour will be hard upon every traveller;
And every wayfarer will lose his way in agony.
With the blood of the dead,
Mountain streams will become red as red wine.
Men high and low will be convulsed with fear;
Even the Czar, at that hour, will be in a wretched state.
This sign will be an example of Divine Wrath,
And Heaven will attack with a drawn sword.

(*Munājāt aur Tablīgh Ḥaq*, couplets 445-454) [translation from Essence of Islam, vol. 5, p. 150-151]

•

Such destruction will come upon towns and villages,
The like of which is not to be seen in the world.
In an instant, houses of mirth shall turn into houses of mourning;
Those rejoicing shall beat their breasts in sorrow.
The high palaces and the lofty castles,
Shall come tumbling down like caves.
In a single jolt, houses will be reduced to a heap of rubble,
There will be no counting the dead.
But God is Merciful, and there is no fear
For those who bow to Him in humility.

(*Paishgoi Jang-i 'Azīm*, couplets 10-14) [translation from Essence of Islam, vol. 5, p. 152]

•

The days of kindness are gone—now that wrathful God
Will display things³² as an ironsmith does with a hammer.

³² The following footnote is by the author himself:

“It should be remembered that the punishment mentioned in this prophecy has been repeatedly described by God Almighty by the word “earthquake”. Although apparently it shall be an earthquake as the word depicts but it is also a way of God Almighty that He uses metaphorical language so we can assume that in all probability it will be an earthquake or it might be some other extraordinary punishment, which has earthquake like devastation. The reason for its repeated publication is that a former prophecy predicting an earthquake was not

(*Paishgoi Jang-i 'Azīm*, couplet 27)

•

Although he himself passed away from this world in 1908, later events unfolded the true nature of this monumental tragedy that befell humanity in the form of the two World Wars. These conflicts of unprecedented proportions spread like wild fires across the face of the earth and claimed human life in the tens of millions. During the process, innumerable hamlets, towns and cities were laid to utter waste, and the seeds of mistrust and suspicion sown in these hostilities have lasted among the various nations until today. What price do we human beings pay for rejecting the noble emissaries of God!

RUMOURS OF WARS

The prophecy in Matthew 24:6 also speaks of “**rumours of wars**”. The First World War, that took the lives of some 20 million persons, was known simply as the Great War. After this enormous tragedy, people could not imagine that they would ever engage again in a conflict involving the entire world. Then, the Second World War broke out that surpassed the previous casualty record and caused the death of some 40-85 million people. It also proved that humanity was rooted in conflict, refusing to learn any lessons from history. Ever since the end of the Second World War—particularly after the dropping of the atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki—there has been constant talk of a Third World War breaking out that may prove to be the mother of all armed conflicts.

The invention of increasingly more destructive armaments and proliferation of nuclear weapons has given humanity the ability to destroy

propagated widely enough and as a result, a large number of people lost their lives. So I considered it necessary to warn people, far and wide, of the second prophecy of an impending earthquake. So that, with its repeated publication the people at large might show some inclination to reform themselves. In order to be saved from this Divine punishment it is not necessary to be a Hindu, Christian, Muslim or be a follower of my sect, but it is imperative to adopt pious ways and forgo criminal conduct.” [English translation from *Durr-e Sameen* published by Lajna Ima'illah Karachi, Publication No. 72, Appendix-1, pages 7-8.]

extremely large number of people in mere moments. At the same time, there is fear of engaging in chemical and biological warfare with unimaginable consequences. At the height of the Cold War, a scenario of “Mutually Assured Destruction” was perceived under which an all-out nuclear conflict would wipe out a large part of the civilised world and may even lead to an end of our modern-day civilisation. In the words of Albert Einstein, “A possible WW III would be so dire as to minimally revert mankind back to the stone ages.”³³

Both previous World Wars—I and II—started from Europe and then spread to the rest of the world. World War Two involved a greater number of nations compared to the earlier one. Except for the dropping of atom bombs at the end of World War II, both earlier world wars were fought with conventional weapons. This situation is likely to change with World War III. At the same time, potential combatants in this future conflict would be more diverse including United States, Russia, China and North Korea—all possessing nuclear weapons. Then there is the crisis in the Middle East, centred on Syria but also including the Israel-Palestine conflict. Until these are peacefully resolved, they are ticking time bombs for a major clash between super powers.

Another factor that makes a future World War more horrifying is the fact that we have begun to rely more and more on computers to launch our bombs and attacks. Since computers have the ability to analyse and assess a situation much faster than any human mind, automatic launch mechanisms have been programmed in most nuclear devices. This makes them susceptible to accidental launch or triggering them through malfunction.

With the election and inauguration of Donald Trump as the 45th President of the United States, there is talk again in the media about the possibility of World War III. On December 12, 2016, *Reuters* reported under World News: “How can we possibly avoid World War III when the president is openly challenging China in ways that are completely unprecedented.” Amazingly, the New Testament prophecy that “**ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars**”, remains true over the past seventy years.

³³ www.en.wikiquote.org/wiki/World—War—III
www.goodreads.com

Chapter 4

FAMINES

In the context of natural disasters in the Latter Days, the New Testament makes the following prophecies with respect to famines:

And there shall be **famines**, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in diverse places. (Matthew 24:7)

... and there shall be earthquakes in diverse places, and there shall be **famines** and troubles: these *are* the beginnings of sorrows. (Mark 13:8)

And great earthquakes shall be in diverse places, and **famines**, and pestilences; **and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.** (Luke 21:11)

The period of the Promised Messiah's advent—including the century following his demise—has seen very significant famines, pestilences and earthquakes in several places in the world.

Famines are generally caused by weather and climatic aberrations including heat waves, excessive rains, untimely rains or lack of rains—all causing widespread scarcity of food. Famines usually take place in areas where the time of rainfall is very critical for the growing and harvesting of crops. However, there are other factors as well that can lead to famines such as locust swarms, windstorms, soil infertility, crop viruses and livestock diseases.

Some regions of the world are more susceptible to famines than others. Historically speaking, sub-Saharan Africa, China, India, Soviet Union and Middle East have been particularly prone to some of the severest famines.

The victims of famines include not only human beings but also domesticated animals. Unlike earthquakes, famines take place over extended periods—sometimes lasting several years—and their severity is often exacerbated by governmental mismanagement and ineffective relief efforts.

FAMINES DURING THE LIFE OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH^{AS}

During the life of the Promised Messiah^{as}, some 121 million persons lost their lives due to famines and droughts all over the world. A significant proportion of these—approximately 29%—died in India alone.³⁴

Following is a chronological listing of some significant famines that have taken place during the life of the Promised Messiah^{as}:

Table-3
Famines during the life of the Promised Messiah^{as}

Period	Famine	Casualties
1810, 1811, 1846, 1849	Chinese Famines	45 million ³⁵
1837-1838	Agra Famine, India	0.8 million
1845-1852	Irish Famine	1 million
1849-1850	Indonesian Famine	0.1 million
1860-1861	Upper Doab Famine, India	2 million
1866	Orissa Famine , India	1 million
1866-1868	Finnish Famine	0.15 million
1869	Rajputana Famine, India	1.5 million
1870-1871	Persian Famine	1.5 – 2 million
1873-1874	Bihar Famine, India	Few deaths due to good relief efforts
1876-1878	Indian Famine	10.3 million
1876-1879	Northern Chinese Famine	13 million
1888	Horn of Africa Famine	1 million
1888-1889	Ganjam Famine, India	0.15 million
1896-1902	Indian Famine	19 million
1905-1906	Bundelkhand Famine, India	0.2 million
1907	Chinese Famine	24 million

³⁴ There are too many sources for individual famines that took place in history to list here individually. A summary of these famines is available at the following sites: www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_famines; www.listverse.com/10-terrible-famines-in-history; www.ourworldindata.org/famines

³⁵ Casualties for the four famines that took place from 1810 to 1849 are recorded as 45 million. It is estimated that some 50% of these casualties took place during the life of the Promised Messiah^{as}.

FAMINES AFTER THE PROMISED MESSIAH^{AS}

Significant casualties continued during the century following the demise of the Promised Messiah^{as}. It is estimated that some 78 million persons lost their lives to these disasters after 1908. Famine casualties in India are not significant in this period, totalling only 3.5%. The Table below gives a chronological listing of these famines that took place during the century after the demise of the Promised Messiah^{as}.

Table-4
Famines after the demise of the Promised Messiah^{as}

Period	Famine	Casualties
1914-1918	Lebanon Famine	0.2 million
1917-1918	Persian Famine	8 – 10 million
1921	Russian Famine	5 million
1921-1922	Tatarstan, Russia	2 million
1928-1930	Chinese Famine	3 million
1932-1933	Soviet Famine	7 – 10 million
1936	Chinese Famine	5 million
1940-1948	Morocco Famine	0.2 million
1941-1944	Leningrad, Russia, Famine	1 million
1941-1944	Greece Famine	0.3 million
1942-1943	Chinese Famine	3 million
1943	Bengal, India Famine	1.4 – 4 million
1944-1945	Indonesia, under Japanese occupation	2.4 million
1944-1945	Vietnam Famine	0.4 million
1946-1947	Soviet Famine	1 – 1.5 million
1958	Tigray, Ethiopia Famine	0.1 million
1958-1961	Chinese Famine	15 – 40 million
1968-1972	Sahel, Africa Famine	1 million
1984-1985	Ethiopian Famine	1 million
1991-1992	Somalian Famine	0.3 million
1994-1998	North Korean Famine	3.5 million

The period of the Promised Messiah's advent as well as the century following his demise were truly times of great famines and droughts and have taken a very significant toll on human lives. This happened despite the fact that great progress had been made by this time in agriculture

technology, laying out of canals and physical means available to alleviate food shortages.

In the context of famines and pestilences visiting the people during his advent, the Promised Messiah makes the following point in one of his Urdu couplets:

Bad times are here—famine and epidemic have come together;
So far there is no repentance—let us now see the end.

(*Munājāt aur Tablīgh Ḥaq*, couplet 194)

Chapter 5

PESTILENCES

A pestilence is a virulent or fatal disease that occurs in epidemic proportions. Being contagious or infectious, it spreads rather quickly within a large population.

In the context of Jesus' return, the actual prophecy of the New Testament goes as follows:

And there shall be famines, and **pestilences**, and earthquakes, in diverse places. (Matthew 24:7)

And great earthquakes shall be in diverse places, and famines, and **pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.** (Luke 21:11)

In history there have been numerous pestilences, usually in the form of the deadly trinity of plague, cholera and smallpox. Historically speaking, these diseases have taken significant toll on human lives. The Black Death of 1347-1351 CE is considered the deadliest epidemic to have struck humanity and claimed the lives of some 75-100 million people worldwide of which 25-50 million casualties occurred in Europe alone. The Black Death came at a time when the population of the world was considerably less than what it is today.

Some of the most significant epidemics during and after the advent of the Promised Messiah^{as} are briefly mentioned below in chronological order:

1. **The First Cholera Pandemic of 1817-1824** was an Asiatic pandemic that started from Calcutta, India, and then spread to other regions including Southeast Asia, China, Middle East, East Africa and the Mediterranean region. The death toll is estimated at hundreds of thousands in India; some 100,000 in Java, Indonesia; and significant numbers in other areas.

2. **The Second Cholera Pandemic of 1829-1849** was another Asiatic epidemic that started in India and reached China, Japan, Russia, western Asia, Europe and even the Americas. During 1831-1832, the disease is estimated to have claimed 100,000 lives in Russia alone; some 55,000 lives in Great Britain; 100,000 lives in France; and 130,000 persons in Egypt. In 1846, some 15,000 persons died in Mecca. In 1849, a second wave of this disease claimed more than 20,000 lives in Great Britain alone. In the United States, the pandemic claimed more than 150,000 lives and its spread to Mexico claimed 200,000 lives.
3. **Great Plains Smallpox Epidemic of 1837** struck the Great Plains region of the United States, Canada and Mexico. Much of the casualties occurred among the native population which lost some 17,000 persons along the Missouri River alone and a similar number in surrounding areas. Since no proper records were being kept for the native people, it is estimated that nearly 100,000 persons of native population fell victim to this epidemic over the entire Great Plains region.
4. **Typhus Epidemic of 1847** was caused by a massive Irish emigration following the Great Famine in that country. Much of the damage was done in Canada where some 20,000 persons lost their lives.
5. **The Third Cholera Pandemic of 1852-1860**, was in fact the third such major outbreak of this disease in India during the nineteenth century. The disease eventually spread to many other countries including rest of Asia, Russia, Europe, Africa and North America. The exact death toll from this pandemic is not known with any degree of certainty. It is estimated to have claimed 23,000 lives in Great Britain alone; some 100,000 to 200,000 lives in Tokyo, Japan; over 235,000 lives in Spain; and more than one million lives in Russia.

6. **The Third³⁶ Plague Pandemic of 1855-1959** started in the Yunnan province in China and spread to other parts of China and to India. In China, the disease took the lives of 100,000 persons before falling below epidemic levels. The plague came to India in 1896 and killed 12.5 million persons over the next thirty years. Initially, the disease started in the port cities of India (brought in by rats travelling in the ships) and quickly spread to other cities and rural areas. Much of the epidemic occurred during the life of the Promised Messiah^{as} and he mentions it in his books as a Sign from God.
7. **The Fourth Cholera Pandemic of 1863-1875** also began in India, in the Ganges Delta of Bengal. The Muslim pilgrims took the disease to Mecca where some 30,000 to 90,000 pilgrims died in the first year of the epidemic. The spread of disease to other countries killed 70,000 persons in Zanzibar; some 90,000 persons in Russia; 165,000 persons in the Austrian Empire; 113,000 persons in Italy; 80,000 persons in Algeria; 50,000 persons in the United States; and 5,600 persons in London alone.
8. **Measles Epidemic of 1875** took place in Fiji after a returning ship from Australia brought home some infected sailors. The epidemic took a toll of 40,000 persons in Fiji.
9. **The Fifth Cholera Pandemic of 1881-1896** was another epidemic of this disease that started in India and then spread throughout Asia, Africa, Europe and South America. The disease claimed 250,000 lives in Europe in 1883-1887; 268,000 lives in Russia during 1893-1894; and 90,000 lives in Japan during 1887-1889. Some 120,000 persons died from this disease in Spain; 60,000 in Iran; 58,000 in Egypt and 8,600 in Hamburg, Germany.

³⁶ The Plague Pandemic of 1855-1959 is generally referred to as the Third such pandemic in history, the first two being the Plague of Justinian which struck the Byzantine Empire during 541-542 CE and the Black Death of Europe that decimated its population during 1346-1353 CE.

10. **Flu Pandemic of 1889-1890** was a deadly epidemic of influenza that caused the death of some one million persons worldwide. The illness was first seen in St Petersburg in Russia and was later referred to as the “Russian Flu”.
11. **Smallpox in the nineteenth century** is estimated to have killed some 400,000 Europeans annually. It caused from 300 to 500 million deaths in the twentieth century. It is estimated that from 1868 to 1907, there were 4.7 million deaths from smallpox in India alone.
12. **The Sixth Cholera Pandemic of 1899-1923** was the sixth pandemic of this disease that began in India where it killed some 800,000 persons. The disease also spread to Middle East, North Africa, Europe and Russia. The disease claimed 500,000 lives in Russia and 200,000 lives in the Philippines.
13. **The Influenza Epidemic of 1918-1920**, that is estimated to have infected some 500 million to nearly one billion persons worldwide, resulted in the death of some 50–100 million persons. This makes it the second deadliest epidemic to have struck humanity in recorded history. This epidemic occurred soon after the demise of the Promised Messiah^{as}.
14. **Asian Flu of 1957-1958** started in China likely from a mutation in wild ducks. In the United States alone, the death toll reached 70,000. Worldwide casualties range from one to four million with the World Health Organisation (WHO) settling for about two million.
15. **Flu Pandemic of 1968** (also known as Hong Kong Flu) was caused by H3N2 strain of the influenza A virus and killed about one million persons worldwide.
16. **Indian Smallpox Epidemic of 1974** took a toll of some 15,000 lives, mostly in the Indian states of Bihar, Orissa and West Bengal.

Many who survived were blinded or disfigured. By 1980, smallpox was declared eradicated from the world.

17. **HIV/AIDS Pandemic of 1981 to present** is a global scourge that has already taken a toll of more than 30 million lives worldwide. The Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is believed to be caused by Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) that is transmitted through blood and body fluids. In 2010 alone, some 3 million persons died worldwide. At present, sub-Saharan Africa is the hardest hit region in the world with highest levels of people infected with HIV. World Health Organisation (WHO) estimated at the end of 1999 that nearly 13 million women and more than 11 million men in sub-Saharan Africa were infected with HIV. This yields a prevalence rate of 8.6% in the population. AIDS is the leading cause of death in sub-Saharan Africa and the fourth leading cause of death worldwide.
18. **SARS Epidemic of 2002-2003** originated in the Guangdong Province of China. The term SARS stands for Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome which is a pneumonia-like condition caused by the SARS corona virus. The disease spread quickly to Southeast Asian countries and one traveller brought it to Canada. While total casualties from this epidemic were rather low (775)³⁷ compared with earlier epidemics, its sudden appearance on the international scene with its highly infectious nature and high morbidity caused great concern in the world. No vaccine exists for this disease.

Reminding the people that famines and pestilences are coming from God as a Sign and support of his truthfulness, the Promised Messiah^{as} writes in his Urdu poetry:

For my support, Thou sent the plague as well
So that those Signs are fulfilled which are the basis for the truth.

³⁷ Total number of people infected with SARS is reported as 8,273.

Bad times are here—famine and epidemic have come together;
So far there is no repentance—let us now see the end.
(*Munājāt aur Tablīgh Ḥaq*, couplet 194)

•

In his Persian poems, the Promised Messiah^{as} writes the following couplets:

When the plague has come from God, you should give it due regard;
Why do you call it a curse? You are accursed yourself.
[*Durr-e Samīn* Farsi, page 322]

•

The spirit of the world is depressed because of this plague—
This is not simply a plague but a violent tempest.
[*Durr-e Samīn* Farsi, page 366]

•

Although Signs are not within the control of anyone,
But I give you a Sign which I have obtained from God.

That such fortunate one shall find escape from the plague
Who would hasten to seek shelter within my four walls.
[*Durr-e Samīn* Farsi, page 367]

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Chapter 6

EARTHQUAKES

Jesus' return in the Latter Days is prophesied to coincide with times of great earthquake activity. The actual words of the New Testament go as follows:

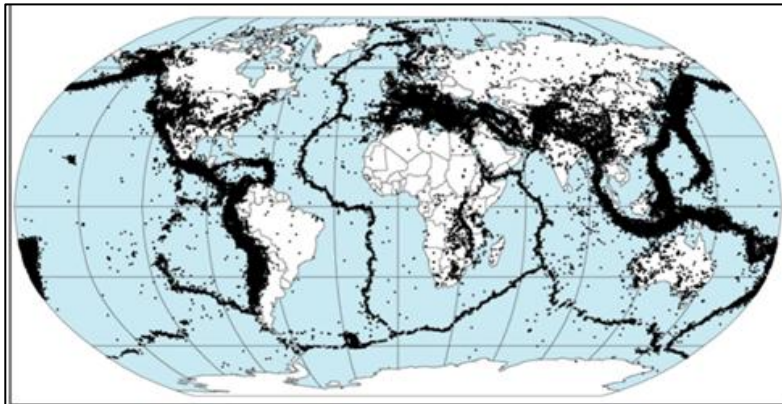
And there shall be famines, and pestilences, and **earthquakes**, in diverse places. (Matthew 24:7)

WHAT CAUSES EARTHQUAKES?

Earthquakes generally take place when the crustal plates floating on the surface of the molten earth snap and release their energy in the form of a shock wave. For this reason, some of the worst earthquakes are aligned along the edges of these plates, which are also the foci of active volcanism and mountain-building activity.

The map below shows the belts of significant seismic activity on the earth generally aligned with plate margins.

The Earthquake Map of the World
A plot of 358,214 Epicentres, 1963-1998
(www.google.ca/Earthquake Map of the World)



Majority of plate margins are aligned at the contact of oceanic and continental plates where the former are subducted under the latter. This applies to the margins of the Pacific Ocean commonly known as the Pacific Ring of Fire.

Some earthquakes take place within the continental lithosphere³⁸ such as in the Himalayan, Karakorum, Hindukush and other mountain ranges in Iran, Turkey and the northern Mediterranean region. Here, continental plates are sliding under other continental plates.

A simplified cross-section of the earth below shows how crustal plates move over the molten Mantle.

Figure shows crustal plates moving over the molten Mantle
([www.google.ca/Crustal Plates](http://www.google.ca/Crustal%20Plates))

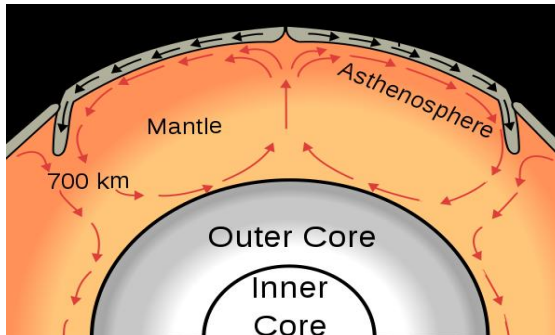
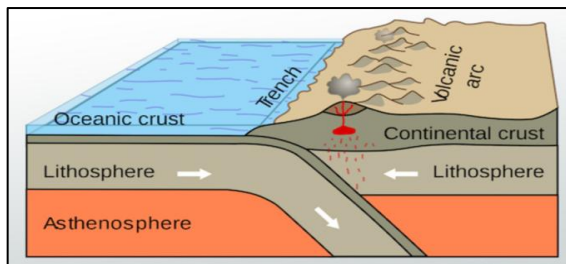


Figure showing subduction of a Lithospheric plate ([www.google.ca/Crustal Plates](http://www.google.ca/Crustal%20Plates))



³⁸ Lithosphere is the outer solid shell of earth (or of any planet) that shows rigid mechanical properties.

Compared to famines and pestilences, the casualties resulting from earthquakes are generally limited but their psychological impact is much higher. The devastation resulting from earthquakes is almost instantaneous and the loss of homes and dwellings makes the impact all the more severe.

THE MEASURE OF EARTHQUAKES' INTENSITIES

The severity or magnitude of an earthquake is measured on an open-ended logarithmic Richter scale. Thus, an earthquake with a magnitude of 6.0 when compared with one of magnitude 5.0 has a shaking amplitude that is 10 times greater and a release of energy that is 31.6 times more. In recent times, the Richter scale has been replaced by the Moment Magnitude Scale with similar numbers. The Richter and MM scales are open ended. The earthquake with the highest magnitude in recorded history took place on May 22, 1960 in Chile and is called the Valdivia or the Great Chilean Earthquake. Despite its high magnitude of 9.5, it killed only about 6,000 persons. It is believed that the largest earthquake possible on earth through plate movements is perhaps magnitude 10. The asteroid impact that destroyed the dinosaurs at the end of Cretaceous Era some 66 million years ago is estimated to be equivalent to magnitude 13 earthquake. Energy released equivalent to a magnitude 15 earthquake will completely destroy the earth.

Frequently, the energy released by an earthquake is quoted in terms of equivalent Hiroshima-size atom bombs. The relationship between earthquake magnitude and the energy released in terms of equivalent Hiroshima-size atom bombs is shown in the Table below:

Table 5
Relationship between Richter Scale and release of energy
(1 Hiroshima size atom bomb releases 2.0×10^{12} Joules)

Richter Scale	Energy in terms of Hiroshima size Atom Bombs
5.0	1 Hiroshima size atom bomb
5.5	5.6 Hiroshima size atom bombs
6.0	31.6 Hiroshima size atom bombs
6.5	178 Hiroshima size atom bombs
7.0	1,000 Hiroshima size atom bombs
7.5	5,623 Hiroshima size atom bombs
8.0	31,622 Hiroshima size atom bombs
8.5	177,827 Hiroshima size atom bombs
9.0	1 million Hiroshima size atom bombs
9.5	5.6 million Hiroshima size atom bombs
10.0	31.6 million Hiroshima size atom bombs

Earthquakes of magnitude 1-4 are classified as Small. They occur on a daily basis and hardly do any damage.

Earthquakes of magnitude 5-6 are classified as Moderate. They occur on a monthly basis and generally do moderate damage. However, they can do severe damage in poorly constructed dwellings and densely populated areas.

Earthquakes of magnitude 7 occur monthly (but less frequently in populated areas). They can do severe damage.

Earthquakes of magnitude 8-9 occur yearly and do very severe damage.

Earthquakes of magnitude 10 occur very rarely. Their frequency of occurrence in populated areas is one every 1,000 years. They can cause extremely high degree of damage.

The damage done by an earthquake depends on several factors including the magnitude of the quake, nearness to the source of the earthquake, the population density and the quality or strength of the dwellings. Historically, some relatively small earthquakes have done great damage due to high population densities and poor quality of homes. Likewise, some of the most severe earthquakes have done little damage to life or buildings in lightly populated or remote regions of the world.

SIGNIFICANT EARTHQUAKES DURING THE LIFE OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH^{AS}

In the Table below, earthquakes are listed in chronological order that came during the life of the Promised Messiah^{AS}. Generally, only earthquakes above magnitude 7.0 are listed unless some lower magnitude earthquakes have resulted in significant casualties. A magnitude 7.0 earthquake releases the same energy as 1,000 Hiroshima size atom bombs.

Table 6
Earthquakes during the life of the Promised Messiah^{AS}
(earthquake magnitudes are given in Richter Scale)
www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lists_of_earthquakes
www.earthquake.usgs.gov/earthquakes
www.list25.com/25-worst-earthquakes-in-history
www.australiangeographic.com.au/topics/...earthquakes

Year	Earthquake Reference	Scale	Casualties
1835	Concepcion, Chile	8.2	50
1837	Galilee, Dead Sea	6.3-6.5	300 +
1838	San Andreas, USA	6.8-7.2	
1838	Vrancea, Romania	7.5	Dozens
1842	Cap-Haitien, Dominican Rep.	8.1	5,300
1843	Wanganui, New Zealand	7.5	Buildings damaged
1854	Ansei Tokai, Japan	8.4	2,000
1854	Ansei Nankai, Japan	8.4	3,000
1854	Ansei Edo, Japan	6.9	7,000 – 10,000
1855	Bursa, Turkey	7.5	300
1855	Gemlik-Mudanya, Turkey	7.0	1,300
1855	Wairarapa, New Zealand	8.2	
1857	Basilicata, Italy	7.0	10,000
1857	Fort Tejon, USA	7.9	Buildings damaged
1858	Hietsu, Japan	7.1	250
1859	Shamakhi, USSR	5.9	100
1859	Erzurum, Turkey	6.1	15,000
1861	Mendoza, Argentina	7.2	4,300
1861	Sumatra, Indonesia	8.5	Several thousand
1863	Hawke's Bay, New Zealand	7.8	
1868	Arica, Chile	8.5-9.0	25,000

1868	Ecuador	6.3-6.7	70,000
1868	Hawaii	7.9	77
1872	Lone Pine, USA	7.4-7.9	27
1873	Alpago, Italy	6.3	80
1875	Cucuta, Columbia	7.5	10,000
1877	Iquique, Peru	8.5- 9.0	2,541
1879	Gansu, China	8.0	22,000
1880	Luzon, Philippines		Unknown
1881	Chios, Turkey	7.3	7,866
1881	Nicobar Islands	7.9	None reported
1886	Charleston, USA	7.0	60
1887	Sonora, Mexico	7.6	51
1888	Canterbury, New Zealand	7.0-7.3	Buildings damaged
1891	Mino-Owari (Nobi), Japan	8.0	7,273
1892	Laguna-Salada, USA	7.1-7.2	None
1893	Quchan, Iran	6.6	18,000
1894	Atlanti, Greece	6.7	255
1894	Istanbul, Turkey	7.0	1,349
1894	San Juan, Argentina	7.5	100
1895	Quchan, Iran	6.8	1,000 – 11,000
1896	Sanriku, Japan	8.5	22,066
1897	Mindanao, Philippines	7.4	50
1897	Assam, India	8.3	1,542
1901	Black Sea	7.2	4
1902	Quetzaltenango, Guatemala	7.5	2,000
1902	Andijan, Uzbekistan	6.4	4,700
1903	Malazgirt-Mus, Turkey	6.7	600
1904	Fairbanks, Alaska, USA	7.3	
1905	Kangra, India	7.8	20,000
1905	Khovsgoi, Mongolia	8.0	
1905	Bulnain Nuru, Mongolia	8.4	
1905	Calabria, Italy	6.7-7.9	560 – 5,000
1906	Ecuador-Colombia	8.8	1,000
1906	San Francisco, USA	7.8	3,000
1906	Aleutian Islands	8.35	
1906	Valparaiso, Chile	8.2	20,000
1906	Western Australia	7.6	
1907	Kingston, Jamaica	6.5	900

EARTHQUAKES AFTER THE PROMISED MESSIAH^{AS}

In the Table below, earthquakes are listed in chronological order that came during the century following the demise of the Promised Messiah^{as}. Generally, only earthquakes above magnitude 7.0 are listed unless some lower magnitude earthquakes have resulted in significant casualties. A magnitude 7.0 earthquake releases the same energy as 1,000 Hiroshima size atom bombs.

Table 7

**Earthquakes after the demise of the Promised Messiah^{as}
(earthquake magnitudes are given in Richter Scale)**

**[www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lists_of_earthquakes;
www.earthquake.usgs.gov/earthquakes; www.list25.com/25-worst-earthquakes-in-history; www.australiangeographic.com.au/topics/...earthquakes]**

Year	Earthquake Reference	Scale	Casualties
1908	Messina, Italy	7.1	100,000 – 200,000
1911	Kebin, Kazakhstan	7.7	450
1911	Sarez, Tajikistan	7.4	90
1911	Michoacan, Mexico	7.6	45
1911	Kikai, Japan	8.1	12
1911	Guerrero, Mexico	7.6	
1912	Murefte Tekirdag, Turkey	7.3	216
1914	Burdur, Turkey	6.9	300
1915	L'Aquila, Italy	7.5	30,000
1915	Pleasant Valley, USA	7.1	
1917	Bali, Indonesia	6.6	1,500
1917	Samoa	8.5	
1918	Celebes Sea, Indonesia	8.3	52
1918	Puerto Rico, USA	7.5	116
1918	Vancouver Island, Canada	7.0	
1920	Garfagnana, Italy	6.5	171
1920	Gansu-Haiyyan, China	7.8-8.5	200,000 – 240,000
1922	Cape Mendocino, USA	7.3	
1922	Atacama, Chile	8.5	1,000
1923	Cape Mendocino, USA	7.2	
1923	Kamchatka, USSR	8.5	
1923	Kanto, Japan	7.9	140,000

1924	Horasan, Turkey	6.8	60
1925	Dali, Yunnan, China	7.0	5,000
1927	Tango, Kyoto, Japan	7.6	3,020
1927	Gulang-Zining, China	7.9	40,000 – 200,000
1927	Lompoc, USA	7.1	
1928	Izmir, Turkey	6.5	50
1928	Chachapoyas, Peru	7.2	25
1929	Susehri-Sivas, Turkey	6.1	64
1929	Murchison, New Zealand	7.8	17
1929	Grand Banks, Canada	7.3	28
1930	Dhubri, India	7.1	
1930	Irpinia, Italy	6.6	1,404
1930	North Izu, Japan	7.3	
1930	Pyu, Burma	7.3	36
1931	Myitkyina, Burma	7.6	
1931	Napier, New Zealand	7.9	258
1931	Managua, Nicaragua	5.8	2,000
1931	Zangezur, Armenia-Azerbaijan	6.3	2,890
1931	Fuyun, China	8.0	10,000
1931	SW Sumatra, Indonesia	7.3	
1932	Jalisco, Mexico	8.2	400
1932	Colima, Mexico	7.8	
1932	Jalisco, Mexico	7.0	75
1932	Lerissos, Greece	7.0	491
1932	Cedar Mountain	7.2	
1932	Gansu, China	7.6	275
1933	Sanriku-Iwate	8.4	2,990
1933	Long Beach, USA	6.4	115
1933	Baffin Bay, Canada	7.4	
1934	Bihar, India	8.1	10,700
1935	Shinchiku, Taiwan	7.1	3,279
1935	Batu Islands, Indonesia	7.7	
1935	Quetta, India	7.7	30,000 – 60,000
1936	Miyagi, Japan	7.2	
1937	Salcha, Alaska, USA	7.3	
1937	Veracruz, Mexico	7.3	34
1938	Kirsehir, Turkey	6.6	160
1938	Shumagin, Alaska	8.2	
1939	Chillan, Chile	7.8	30,000
1939	Dikili-Izmir, Turkey	6.6	60
1939	Erzincan, Turkey	7.8	32,700

1940	Imperial Valley, USA	7.1	9
1940	Vrancea, Romania	7.4	4,000
1941	Colima, Mexico	7.7	90
1941	Meeberrie, W. Australia	7.2	
1942	Guatemala	7.7	38
1942	Peru	8.2	30
1942	Erbaa, Turkey	7.0	3,000
1943	Ovalle, Chile	8.2	12
1943	Alahan Panjang, Indonesia	7.3	
1943	Hendek, Turkey	6.6	336
1943	Central Java, Indonesia	8.0	
1943	Ladik-Samsun, Turkey	7.4	4,000
1944	San Juan, Argentina	7.8	8,000 – 10,000
1944	Gerede-Bolu, Turkey	7.5	3,959
1944	Tonankai, Japan	8.1	1,223
1945	Balochistan, India	8.1	4,000
1946	Unimak, Alaska, USA	7.3	165
1946	Vancouver Island, Canada	7.3	
1946	Dominican Republic	8.0	
1946	Nankaido, Japan	8.1	1,330
1947	Assam, India	7.3	
1947	Fairbanks, Alaska, USA	7.2	
1948	Litang, China	7.2	800
1948	Ashgabat, USSR	7.3	110,000
1949	Olympia, USA	7.1	8
1949	Gharm, Tajikistan	7.4	7,200
1949	Ambato, Ecuador	6.8	6,000
1949	Karlioia, Turkey	6.8	450
1949	Queen Charlotte	8.1	0
1949	Tierra del Fuego, Chile	7.8	
1950	Assam, India	8.6	1,526
1951	North Anatolian, Turkey	6.9	50
1952	Kern County, USA	7.3	12
1952	Kamchatka, USSR	9.0	
1953	Yenice, Turkey	7.2	265
1953	Concepcion, Chile	7.6	12
1953	Kefalonia, Greece	7.2	476
1953	Calama, Chile	7.4	3
1953	Tumbes, Peru	7.5	6
1954	Spain	7.9	
1954	Fairview Peak, USA	7.1	

1955	Yuzha, China	6.8	728
1956	Sagaing, Burma	7.1	
1956	Nicaragua	7.3	
1957	Andreanof, Alaska, USA	8.6	0
1957	Fethiye-Mugla, Turkey	7.1	67
1957	Abant-Bolu, Turkey	7.1	52
1957	Govi-Altai, Mongolia	8.1	30
1958	Huslia, Alsaka, USA	7.3	
1958	Fairweather, Alaska	7.7	5
1959	Kamchatka, USSR	8.0	1
1959	Hebgen Lake, USA	7.3	28
1960	Agadir, Morocco	5.7	10,000
1960	Valdivia, Chile	9.5	6,000
1960	Northern Peru	7.8	
1963	Su-ao, Taiwan	7.3	3
1963	Marj, Libya	5.6	300
1963	Skopje, Macedonia	6.1	1,000
1963	Kuril Islands	8.5	0
1964	Prince William, Alaska	9.2	125
1964	Niigata, Japan	7.5	26
1964	Guerrero, Mexico	7.4	40
1964	Manyas, Turkey	7.0	23
1965	Sanana, Indonesia	8.2	71
1965	Rat Islands, Alaska	8.7	
1965	Ligua, Chile	7.4	280
1965	Oaxaca, Mexico	7.5	6
1966	Hualien, Taiwan	8.0	
1966	Toro, Uganda-DRC	6.1	157
1966	Varto-Mus, Turkey	6.7	2,396
1966	Peru	8.1	
1966	Taltal, Chile	8.1	6
1967	Mudurnu, Turkey	7.2	89
1967	Caracas, Venezuela	6.5	236
1968	Hyuga-nada, Japan	7.5	
1968	Tokachi, Japan	8.3	
1968	Inangahua, New Zealand	7.1	3
1968	Dashte Bayaz, Iran	7.3	7,000 – 12,000
1969	Portugal	7.8	13
1969	Alashehir-Manisa, Turkey	6.5	53
1969	Boahi Bay, China	7.4	10
1969	Yangjiang, China	5.9	3,000

1970	Tonghai, China	7.7	10,000 – 15,000
1970	Yungay-Ancash, Peru	8.0	143,000
1970	Gediz, Turkey	7.2	1,086
1970	Colombia	8.0	
1970	Peru-Ecuador	7.1	
1971	San Fenrnando, USA	6.7	65
1971	Bingot, Turkey	6.9	1,000 +
1971	Illabael, Chile	7.5	85
1971	Solomon Islands, July 14	8.0	2
1971	Solomon Islands, July 26	8.1	0
1972	Qir, Iran	6.7	5,374
1972	Ruisui, Taiwan	7.2	5
1972	Managua, Nicaragua	6.2	6,000
1974	Zhaotong, China	7.0	20,000
1974	Lima, Peru	8.1	78
1975	Haicheng, China	7.0	10,000
1975	North Atlantic	7.9	
1975	Lice, Turkey	6.6	2,385
1975	Kilauea, Hawaii, USA	7.2	2
1976	Guatemala	7.5	23,000
1976	Friuli, Italy	6.4	989
1976	Tangshan, China	8.2	255,000
1976	Moro Gulf, Philippines	8.0	4,791
1976	Muradiye, Turkey	7.5	3,840
1977	Bucharest, Romania	7.5	1,500
1978	Miyagi, Japan	7.7	28
1978	Tabas, Iran	7.7	15,000
1979	Montenegro, Croatia	7.0	136
1979	Tumaco, Colombia	8.2	600
1980	Asnam, Algeria	7.7	5,000
1980	Gorda Plate, USA	7.2	
1980	Irpinia, Italy	6.8	2,735
1981	Irian Jaya, Indonesia	6.7	305
1981	Dawu, Sichuan, China	6.8	150
1981	Playa Azul, Mexico	7.3	3
1982	Dhamar, N. Yemen	6.0	2,000
1983	Popayan, Colombia	5.5	197
1983	Borah Peak, USA	7.0	2
1983	Erzurun, Turkey	6.9	1,155
1983	Chagos, Indian Ocean	7.7	
1984	North Sumatra, Indonesia	7.2	

1985	Santiago, Chile	7.8	177
1985	Rapel Lake, Chile	7.5	2
1985	Mexico City, Mexico	8.0	9,500
1986	Andreanof Island, Alaska, USA	8.0	
1986	San Salvador	5.4	1,000 +
1987	Napo, Ecuador	6.1-6.9	1,000 +
1987	Gulf of Alaska, USA	7.9	
1988	Gulf of Alaska, USA	7.8	
1988	Spitak, Armenia	6.8	25,000
1989	Loma Prieta, USA	6.9	63
1990	Panay, Philippines	7.1	8
1990	Rudbar, Iran	7.4	40,000
1990	Izmir, Turkey	7.9	17,000 – 45,000
1990	Luzon, Philippines	7.9	1,621
1991	Honeydew, USA	7.1	
1992	Cape Mendocino, USA	6.5-7.2	
1992	Landers, USA	7.3	3
1992	Nicaragua	7.7	116
1992	Cairo, Egypt	5.8	545
1993	Hokkaido, Japan	7.7	230
1993	Latur-Killari, India	6.2	9,748
1994	Northridge, USA	6.7	72
1994	Liwa, Sumatra, Indonesia	6.9	207
1994	Bolivia	8.2	5
1994	Cape Mendocino, USA	7.1	
1994	Kuril Islands, USSR	8.2	10
1994	Calapan, Mindoro, Philippines	7.1	78
1994	Honshu, Japan	7.7	2
1995	Hyogo-Hanshin, Japan	6.9	6,434
1995	Neftegorsk, USSR	7.1	1,995
1995	Antofagasta, Chile	8.0	3
1995	Guerrero, Mexico	7.4	3
1995	Dinar, Turkey	6.1	90
1995	Jalisco, Mexico	8.0	49
1995	Chiapas, Mexico	7.1	
1995	Wuding, China	6.2	53
1996	Biak, Indonesia	8.1	108
1996	Nazca, Peru	7.5	14
1997	Punitaqui, Chile	7.1	8
1997	Manyi, Tibet	7.4	
1998	Antofagasta, Chile	7.1	1

1998	Ceyhan-Adana, Turkey	6.2	146
1998	Papua New Guinea	7.0	2,183
1999	Risaralda, Colombia	6.2	1,185
1999	Izmit, Turkey	7.4	17,127
1999	Chichi, Taiwan	7.7	2,400
1999	Hector Mine, USA	7.2	
1999	Duzce, Turkey	7.2	894
2000	Enggano, Sumatra, Indonesia	7.9	103
2000	New Ireland, Papua New Guinea	8.0	2
2000	Baku, Azerbaijan	7.0	26
2001	Mindanao, Philippines	7.5	0
2001	Vanuatu	7.1	0
2001	Kodiak Island, Alaska, USA	7.0	0
2001	El Salvador	7.7	944
2001	Gujarat, India	7.7	20,085
2001	Southern Sumatra, Indonesia	7.4	0
2001	Moluccas Sea	7.1	0
2001	Kermadec Islands, New Zealand	7.2	0
2001	Southern Peru	8.4	74
2001	North Island, New Zealand	7.1	0
2001	Guam	7.0	0
2001	Banda Sea, Indonesia	7.5	0
2001	New Britain, Papua New Guinea	7.0	0
2001	Kuniun-Qinghai, China	7.8	0
2001	South of Australia	7.1	0
2002	Vanuatu	7.2	0
2002	Hindukush, Afghanistan	7.4	168
2002	Mindanao, Philippines	7.5	15
2002	Hindukush, Afghanistan	6.1	1,000
2002	Taiwan	7.1	5
2002	Hindukush, Afghanistan	5.9	50
2002	Guam	7.1	0
2002	Zahra, Iran	6.5	261
2002	Jilin-Heilongjiang, China	7.3	0
2002	Fiji	7.7	0
2002	Papua New Guinea	7.6	4
2002	Papua New Guinea	7.6	8
2002	Simeulue, Indonesia	7.4	3
2002	Central Alaska, USA	7.9	0
2002	Kuril Islands, Russia	7.3	0
2003	Solomon Islands	7.3	0

2003	Colima, Mexico	7.6	29
2003	Ninjiang, China	6.3	261
2003	Aleutian Islands, Alaska, USA	7.1	0
2003	Bingo, Eastern Turkey	6.4	177
2003	Boumerdes, Northern Algeria	6.8	2,266
2003	Honshu, Japan	7.0	0
2003	Halmahera, Indonesia	7.0	1
2003	Amazonas, Brazil	7.1	0
2003	South Island, New Zealand	7.2	0
2003	Hokkaido, Japan	8.3	0
2003	Siberia, Russia	7.3	3
2003	Aleutian Islands, Alaska, USA	7.8	0
2003	Bam, South-eastern Iran	6.6	30,000
2003	Loyalty Islands, New Caledonia	7.3	0
2004	Papua, Indonesia	7.3	37
2004	Al Hoceima, North Morocco	6.4	631
2004	Fiji	7.1	0
2004	Southern Sumatra, Indonesia	7.3	0
2004	Honshu, Japan	7.4	0
2004	Kepulauan Alor, Indonesia	7.5	34
2004	West Colombia	7.2	0
2004	South Island, New Zealand	7.1	0
2004	Papua, Indonesia	7.1	32
2004	Hokkaido, Japan	7.0	0
2004	Macquarie Island, Australia	8.1	0
2004	Sumatra, Indonesia	9.1-9.3	230,000 – 300,000
2004	Nicobar Islands, India	7.1	0
2005	Celebes Sea, Indonesia	7.1	2
2005	Zarand, Central Iran	6.4	612
2005	Banda Sea, Indonesia	7.1	0
2005	Nias-Simeulue, Sumatra, Indon.	8.6	1,313
2005	Tarapaca, Chile	7.8	11
2005	Nicobar Islands, India	7.3	0
2005	Miyagi, Honshu, Japan	7.2	0
2005	New Ireland, PNG	7.7	0
2005	North Peru	7.5	5
2005	Kashmir, Pakistan	7.6	100,000
2005	Honshu, Japan	7.0	0
2006	South Sandwich Islands	7.4	0
2006	Fiji	7.2	0
2006	Banda Sea	7.6	0

2006	Mozambique	7.0	4
2006	Western Iran	6.1	70
2006	Kamchatka, Russia	7.6	0
2006	Tonga	8.0	0
2006	Kermadec, New Zealand	7.4	0
2006	Yogyakarta, Indonesia	6.3	5,782
2006	Pangandaran, Indonesia	7.7	730
2006	Kuril Islands, Russia	8.3	0
2006	Hengchun, Taiwan	7.1	2
2007	Kuril Islands, Russia	8.1	0
2007	Moluccas Sea, Indonesia	7.5	4
2007	Southern Sumatra, Indonesia	6.4	67
2007	Vanuatu	7.1	0
2007	Solomon Islands	8.1	54
2007	Vanuatu	7.2	0
2007	Java, Indonesia	7.5	0
2007	Peru	8.0	519
2007	Santa Cruz, Solomon Islands	7.2	0
2007	Southern Sumatra, Indonesia	8.5	25
2007	Mentawai Island, Indonesia	7.9	0
2007	Volcano Islands, Japan	7.5	0
2007	Auckland Islands, New Zealand	7.4	0
2007	Mariana Islands, USA	7.2	0
2007	Antofagasta, Chile	7.7	2
2007	Martinique, France	7.4	1
2007	Fiji	7.8	0
2007	Andreanof, Aleutian Islands	7.2	0
2008	Simeulue, Indonesia	7.4	3
2008	Mentawai Island, Indonesia	7.2	0
2008	Xinjiang-Xizang, China	7.2	0
2008	Loyalty Islands, New Caledonia	7.3	0
2008	Macquarie Island, Australia	7.1	0
2008	Sichuan, China	7.9	70,000
2008	South Sandwich Island	7.0	0
2008	Sea of Okhotsk	7.7	0
2008	Honshu, Japan	7.0	0
2008	Kermadec, New Zealand	7.0	0
2008	Kyrgyzstan	6.7	75
2008	Minahasa, Indonesia	7.4	6
2008	Sea of Okhotsk	7.3	0
2009	North coast of Papua, Indonesia	7.7	5

2009	Kuril Islands, Russia	7.4	0
2009	Talaud Island, Indonesia	7.2	0
2009	Kermadec Island, New Zealand	7.0	0
2009	Tonga	7.6	0
2009	L'Aquila, Italy	6.3	308
2009	Honduras	7.3	7
2009	Fiordland, New Zealand	7.9	0
2009	Izu, Honshu, Japan	7.1	0
2009	Andaman, Islands, India	7.5	0
2009	West Java, Indonesia	7.0	79
2009	Samoa Islands	8.1	189
2009	South Sumatra, Indonesia	7.6	1,115
2009	Vanuatu	7.8	0
2009	Fiji	7.3	0
2010	Solomon Islands	7.1	0
2010	Port-au-Prince, Haiti	7.0	316,000
2010	Ryukyu Islands	7.0	0
2010	Bio-Bio, Chile	8.8	525
2010	Baja, California, USA	7.2	4
2010	North Sumatra, Indonesia	7.8	0
2010	Yushu-Qingahi, China	6.9	2,698
2010	North Sumatra, Indonesia	7.2	0
2010	Vanuatu	7.1	0
2010	Nicobar Islands, India	7.5	0
2010	North Papua, Indonesia	7.0	17
2010	New Britain, PNG	7.3	0
2010	Moro Gulf, Philippines	7.6	0
2010	New Britain, PNG	7.0	0
2010	Vanuatu	7.3	0
2010	Ecuador	7.1	0
2010	South Island, New Zealand	7.0	0
2010	South Papua, Indonesia	7.2	
2010	Mentawai, Indonesia	7.7	408
2010	Bonin, Ogasawara, Japan	7.4	0
2010	Vanuatu	7.3	0
2011	Santiago del Estero, Argentina	7.0	0
2011	Araucania, Chile	7.1	0
2011	Loyalty Islands, New Caledonia	7.0	0
2011	Baluchistan, Pakistan	7.2	3
2011	South Island, New Zealand	6.1	185
2011	Honshu, Japan	7.3	0

2011	Tohoku, Honshu, Japan	9.0	18,184
2011	Myanmar	6.9	150
2011	Honshu, Japan	7.1	8
2011	Aleutian Islands, Alaska	7.2	0
2011	Kermadec Island, New Zealand	7.6	0
2011	Honshu, Japan	7.0	0
2011	Vanuatu	7.1	0
2011	Fiji	7.3	0
2011	Sikkim, India	6.9	111
2011	Kermadec Islands, New Zealand	7.4	0
2011	Van, Eastern Turkey	7.1	604
2011	PNG	7.1	0
2012	West Sumatra, Indonesia	7.2	0
2012	Vanuatu	7.1	0
2012	Negros-Cebu, Philippines	6.7	51
2012	Oaxaca, Mexico	7.4	2
2012	Maule, Chile	7.1	1
2012	North Sumatra, Indonesia	8.6	10
2012	Sea of Okhotsk	7.7	0
2012	El Salvador	7.3	0
2012	Samar, Philippines	7.6	1
2012	Costa Rica	7.6	2
2012	Sichuan-Yunnan, China	5.6	81
2012	Colombia	7.3	0
2012	Queen Charlotte Islands, Canada	7.7	0
2012	Guatemala	7.4	39
2012	Kamaishi, Honshu, Japan	7.3	3
2012	Banda Sea, Indonesia	7.1	0
2013	South-eastern Alaska, USA	7.5	0
2013	Santa Cruz, Solomon Islands	8.0	13
2013	Papua, Indonesia	7.0	0
2013	Saravan, Iran-Pakistan	7.7	35
2013	Kuril Islands, Russia	7.2	0
2013	Lushan-Sichuan, China	6.6	193
2013	Fiji	7.4	0
2013	Okhotsk Sea	8.3	0
2013	New Ireland, PNG	7.3	0
2013	South Sandwich Islands	7.3	0
2013	Dingxi, Gansu, China	5.9	95
2013	Andreanof Islands, Aleutian Isl.	7.0	0
2013	Baluchistan, Pakistan	7.7	825

2013	Southern Peru	7.1	3
2013	Bohol, Philippines	7.1	222
2013	Honshu, Japan	7.1	0
2013	Scotia Sea	7.7	0
2013	Falkland Islands	7.0	0
2014	Tarapaca, Chile	8.2	6
2014	Bougainville Island, PNG	7.1	1
2014	Solomon Islands	7.6	0
2014	Guerrero, Mexico	7.2	0
2014	Bougainville Island, PNG	7.5	0
2014	Rat Islands, Aleutian Islands	7.9	0
2014	El Salvador	7.3	1
2014	Fiji	7.1	0
2014	Moluccas Sea	7.1	0
2015	New Britain, PNG	7.5	0
2015	Nepal	7.8	9,018
2015	New Britain, PNG	7.5	0
2015	Bougainville, PNG	7.1	0
2015	Nepal	7.3	218
2015	Ogasawara Islands, Japan	7.8	0
2015	Santa Cruz, Solomon Islands	7.0	0
2015	Papua, Indonesia	7.0	1
2015	Coquimbo-Illapel, Chile	8.3	14
2015	Vanuatu	7.1	0
2015	Hindukush, Afghanistan	7.5	398
2015	Peru	7.6	0
2015	Tajikistan	7.2	2
2016	Old Lliama, Alaska, USA	7.1	0
2016	Kamchatka, Russia	7.2	0
2016	Taiwan	6.4	117
2016	South-west Sumatra, Indonesia	7.8	0
2016	Kumamoto-Kyushu, Japan	7.0	40
2016	Ecuador	7.8	673
2016	Vanuatu	7.0	0
2016	South Sandwich Islands	7.2	0
2016	Pagan, North Mariana Isl., USA	7.7	0
2016	Loyalty Islands, New Caledonia	7.2	0
2016	South Georgia Island	7.4	0
2016	Central Italy	6.2	297
2016	Ascension Island	7.1	0
2016	North Island, New Zealand	7.1	0

2016	Kaikoura, South Island, N.Z.	7.8	2
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ARE EARTHQUAKES INCREASING IN FREQUENCY?

It should be noted that our earth is a very dynamic planet. It is estimated that some 500,000 detectable earthquakes occur in the world each year. Of these, some 100,000 can be felt by us and nearly 100 cause some damage. Earthquakes of low intensities (up to magnitude 4.0) occur on a daily basis somewhere in the world. Earthquakes of moderate intensity such as 6.0 and 7.0 occur on a monthly basis. They only attract attention if any casualties or damage to buildings takes place in populated areas. As the population of the earth grows, the earthquakes are liable to cause greater devastation. Various researchers have demonstrated that generally speaking, earthquake frequencies have risen over the past fifty years. However, much of this increase is not real but a reflection of better and more widespread installation of seismographs or recording devices. Researchers agree that earthquakes of magnitude 8 and above are taking place approximately once a year with some statistical noise in the data over short periods of study.

LIST OF SUPER EARTHQUAKES

One way to look at the New Testament prophecy is to consider super earthquakes—those that either measured 9.0 or higher on the Richter scale or caused the death of more than 100,000 persons. It should be noted that a 9.0 scale earthquake releases the same amount of energy as one million Hiroshima size atom bombs. Following is a list of such earthquakes in the past two thousand years:

Table 8

**List of Super Earthquakes that killed more than 100,000 persons
(Earthquake magnitudes are given in the Richter Scale)**

www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lists_of_earthquakes

www.earthquake.usgs.gov/earthquakes

www.list25.com/25-worst-earthquakes-in-history

www.australiangeographic.com.au/topics/...earthquakes

Year	Earthquake Reference	Scale	Casualties
<u>Super Earthquakes before the Promised Messiah's Advent</u>			
856	Damghan, Iran	8.0	200,000
1138	Aleppo, Syria	8.5	230,000
1290	Chihili, China	6.8	100,000
1556	Shaanxi, China	8.0	830,000
<u>Super Earthquakes during the life of the Promised Messiah^{as}</u>			
1868	Arica, Chile	9.0	25,000
1877	Iquique, Peru	9.0	2,541
<u>Super Earthquakes during the century after the demise of the Promised Messiah^{as}</u>			
1908	Messina, Italy	7.1	100,000 – 200,000
1920	Gansu-Haiyyan, China	7.8-8.5	200,000 – 240,000
1923	Kanto, Japan	7.9	140,000
1927	Gulang-Xining, China	7.9	120,000
1948	Ashgabat, USSR	7.3	110,000
1952	Kamchatka, USSR	9.0	0
1960	Valdivia, Chile	9.5	6,000
1964	Prince Williams, Alaska	9.2	125
1970	Yungay, Peru	7.9-8.0	143,000
1976	Tangshan, China	8.2	255,000
2004	Sumatra, Indonesia	9.1-9.3	300,000
2005	Kashmir, Pakistan	7.6	100,000
2010	Port-au-prince, Haiti	7.0	316,000
2011	Tohoku, Hanshu, Japan	9.0	18,184

In the above list, we notice that prior to the advent of the Promised Messiah^{as}, there were only four Super Earthquakes in history based largely on

fatalities. The true magnitude of these earthquakes can only be guessed but cannot be determined accurately. This yields a frequency of occurrence of a Super Earthquake as one every 450 years. During the life of the Promised Messiah^{as}, there were only two Super Earthquakes based on their intensities which measured at least 9.0 on the Richter scale. This gives a frequency of occurrence of about one every 36.5 years. Then, during the century following the demise of the Promised Messiah^{as}, fourteen Super Earthquakes took place in the world. This is a very high frequency of one every 7.4 years. As mentioned earlier, one cause for a moderate earthquake to become a super earthquake is for it to occur in a densely populated area where it can do maximum damage. Thus, the increase in population also becomes a significant factor in this equation.

Irrespective of the various causes (including population increase and extensive arrays of seismographs), many researchers feel that the earthquakes have indeed become more frequent and more deadly during the past 180 years since the birth of the Promised Messiah^{as}.

Observing the frequency and severity of earthquakes at his advent, the Promised Messiah writes in his Urdu poetry (*Durr-e Samīn* Urdu):

Wake up quick, O you who sleep; for this is not the time for slumber,
My heart is in anguish due to what Divine revelation has communicated to me.
I see the earth turned upside down by the earthquake;
The time is very near and the flood is at the gates.
The Benevolent Master stands at the roadside;
The righteous have nothing to fear from the terrible storm.
No boat can save you from this flood;
Every scheme has failed, and there remains only the One Who is Oft-Returning with compassion.

(*Paishgoi Zalzala 'Azīma*, couplets 1-4, *Durr-e Samīn* Urdu, page 78) [English translation from *Essence of Islam*, volume V, page 150]

•

Awake, O friends! The quake is about to strike again;
God is again going to display His might soon.
That quake that you saw in the month of February,
Be sure that it was just a reproof to make you understand.

Cure this problem, friends, with water from the eyes;
The sky, O heedless ones, is about to rain down fire.
Why shouldn't the tremors come? The path of piety is lost;
Even a Muslim is only a Muslim merely in name!

(*Inzār*, couplets 1-5, *Durr-e Samīn* Urdu, page 79).

•

O friends, the days for the coming of earthquakes are about to come again;
Not only of earthquakes, but also of departing from this world.
You are in comfort—but what can we say of our own state?
We see in front of our eyes days of extreme distress.
Why is the wrath of God ablaze?—Ask me, O heedless ones;
Its cause has become the days when I was denied.
What stranger would know what His sense of Honour shall display!
That Dear shall tell them Himself on that Day of Telling.
He shall display the dazzle of His Sign five times;
This is the Word of God—you will know it on that Day of Admonition.
Great joy to you, O seekers! they are now near
The days when that Beloved of mine shall show His Face.
That hour is nigh when they shall call me as “Jesus”—
Few are the days now to be called the Deceiver.

(*Inzār wa Tabshīr*, couplets 1-7, *Durr-e Samīn* Urdu, page 112)

•

However, I am amazed at the people again and again;
Why don't they see as to what is becoming manifest?
Thanks be to God, my sighs, too, have not gone to waste—
Some took the form of plague and some the rage of quakes.
On one side, the deadly plague is devastating the land;
A hundred thousand men are becoming its prey—
On the other side, such an earthquake came on Tuesday³⁹
That caused a scene of Doomsday with great hue and cry.
In an instant, thousands passed away from this world—
How can I count the number of houses that were razed?

³⁹ Referring to the Kangra Earthquake of Tuesday April 4, 1905, which registered 7.8 on the Richter scale and killed some 20,000 persons.

Once they were high mansions, the frill and fancy of the masses,
Then they were a heap of bricks, full of dirt and dust.
That thing that is called the Doomsday, it erupted in an instant—
Death was calling everywhere and there was restlessness.
Many a town and hamlet were buried under the mounts—
Thousands of people died—departing from the world.
The hearts have not softened even after seeing this Sign;
Thus, only God knows what calamity do they await now.

(*Munajāt aur Tablīgh-i Haq*, couplets 426-434, *Durr-e Samīn* Urdu, page 183)

•

The Sign of earthquake that occurred on Tuesday⁴⁰,
Was but a morsel fed to you on empty stomach.
O heedless ones! A big feast is to be laid out in a few days;
Which the Gracious God speaks about repeatedly in the Qur'an.
That moment is hard for the evil-doers and the sinners
By which they will turn into minced meat—then seeing its seasoning;
(*Paishgoi Jang-i 'Azīm*, couplets 1-3, *Durr-e Samīn* Urdu, page 188)
[translation from *Essence of Islam*, vol. 5, p. 151]

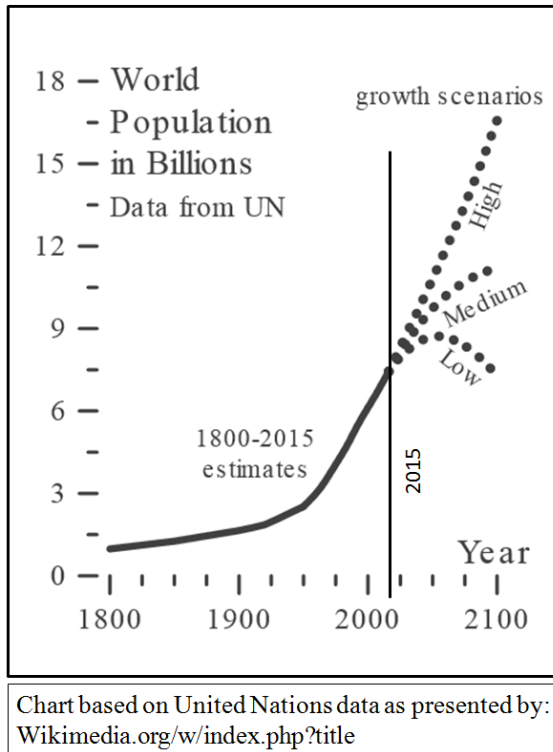
⁴⁰ Referring to the Kangra Earthquake of Tuesday April 4, 1905, which registered 7.8 on the Richter scale and killed some 20,000 persons.

Chapter 7

IMPACT OF WORLD POPULATION ON THE SEVERITY OF PESTILENCES AND EARTHQUAKES

It should be noted that the devastations epidemics and depend to on the density and population of Both the densities and world have been increasing in particularly sudden the growth 1950. The the increase population until present

the
caused by
earthquakes
some extent
population
overall
the world.
population
overall
population
steadily
the past,
after the
increase in
rate after
chart shows
in world
since 1800
time.



The world stands at 7.4 billion as of 2016. It is forecast to increase to 11.2 billion by year 2100. In 1700 CE, the world population stood at only 600 million and grew tenfold to 6.3 billion by 2003. The first time the world population reached 2 billion from the beginning of time was in 1927. Since then, the next 2 billion were added in only 47 years, in 1974. The adding of

the next 2 billion took only 25 years (by 1999). In the past forty years, the world population has doubled in size.

The increased world population will not only make routine earthquakes more devastating but will also lead to quicker and more extensive spread of epidemics. At the same time, increased world population will cause political stresses and may lead to armed conflicts.

Chapter 8

DARKENING OF THE SUN AND MOON

In the context of the return of the Messiah, the New Testament book of Mark states with reference to the Latter Days:

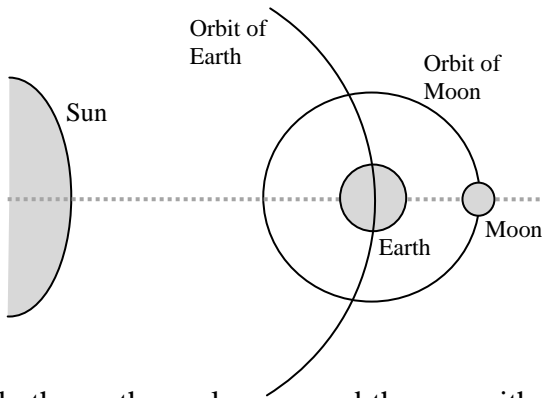
“Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall **the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light**, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken;

And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven...” (Matthew 24:29-30)

And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, **there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;** (Revelation 6:12)

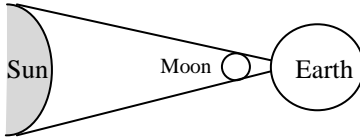
WHAT ARE ECLIPSES?

To understand the eclipses, we need to understand the orbits of the earth and moon, as shown in the Figure below:



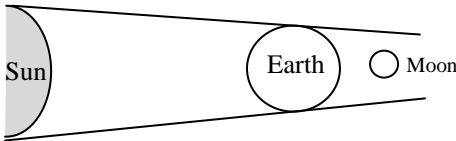
While the earth revolves around the sun with a periodicity of one year, the moon revolves around the earth with a periodicity of one lunar month or about 29-30 days.

The darkening of the sun and moon takes place during the solar and lunar eclipses. A solar eclipse takes place when the moon comes in between the sun and the earth, blocking the light of the former to reach the latter. This happens at the time of new moon as shown below:



Geometry of a solar eclipse

The lunar eclipse occurs when the earth comes in between the sun and the moon, throwing its shadow upon the latter. This happens at the time of full moon:



Geometry of a lunar eclipse

WHAT IS SPECIAL ABOUT LATTER DAY ECLIPSES?

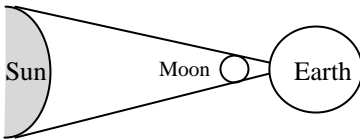
Eclipses of the sun and moon are common astronomical phenomena that take place several times each year. A solar eclipse occurs somewhere on the earth around 2-5 times per year. Similarly, a lunar eclipse takes place 2-5 times each year. The eclipses can be partial or total depending upon the area of the sun or moon that appears to be eclipsed.

Since both solar and lunar eclipses occur frequently, there is nothing special in such events that could indicate the onset of the Latter Days and the return of the Messiah. Such eclipses have been taking place ever since the sun, earth and moon came into being. However, a *Hadith* of the Holy Prophet^{sa} that is recorded by Dar Qutni⁴¹, is more specific in the actual manner in which these eclipses were to take place:

⁴¹ Abul Hasan Darqutni (918-995 CE / 306-385 AH) was a Muslim scholar and collector of Hadiths born in Baghdad.

“For our Mahdi there are appointed two signs which have never been manifested for any other claimant since the creation of the heavens and the earth. One is the eclipse of the moon on the first of Ramaḍān and the other is the eclipse of the sun in the middle of Ramaḍān. These two signs have not appeared since the creation of the heavens and the earth.”

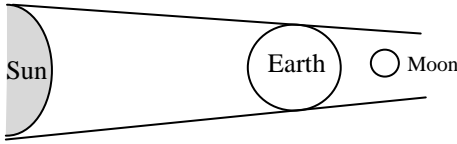
While scholars throughout Islamic history were well aware of this Hadith, they generally associated it with some supernatural phenomenon. It is a known fact that the eclipse of the moon cannot take place on the first of Ramaḍān. During the first of any lunar month, the sun-earth-moon geometry is such that only a solar eclipse is possible. The moon can only be eclipsed when the earth positions itself in between the sun and the moon, blocking the former’s light from falling on the latter. Thus, the moon cannot be eclipsed on the first of any lunar month since it is already in the form of the new moon and hardly visible. See Figure below:



Situation around the first of Ramadan.

No lunar eclipse is possible since earth cannot throw its shadow on the moon which is in a New Moon phase. Only a solar eclipse is possible as actually happened.

Likewise, a solar eclipse cannot occur in the middle of Ramaḍān. During the middle of any lunar month, the sun-earth-moon geometry is such that only a lunar eclipse can occur. The sun can only be eclipsed when an object such as the moon gets in between the sun and the earth, blocking the former’s light from reaching the latter. The sun cannot be eclipsed in the middle of any lunar month since the sun and the moon are on different sides of the earth and the moon is incapable of blocking the sun’s light to cause a solar eclipse. See Figure below:



Situation around the middle of Ramadan.

No solar eclipse is possible since the moon is not in a position to obstruct the sun. Only a lunar eclipse is possible as actually happened.

Thus, the fulfilment of the Hadith, according to its literal reading, is a physical and mathematical impossibility and a logical contradiction in astronomy (see Figures above for additional explanation).

EXPLANATION OF DAR QUTNI'S HADITH

Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} was the first person in history who interpreted the Hadith and the prophecy in such a way that it could comply with astronomical truth and geometrical requirements for the eclipses. Because of atmospheric conditions and different alignments of the sun-earth-moon system at different points on the earth, a lunar or solar eclipse manifests itself within three possible days. An eclipse of the moon can occur on the 13th, 14th or 15th night of a lunar month near the time of the Full Moon. An eclipse of the sun can take place on the 27th, 28th or 29th day of the lunar month, near the time of the New Moon. The Promised Messiah^{as} asserted that the reference to the lunar eclipse on the first of Ramadhan actually means *the first of the three possible dates of Ramadhan* which is 13th. Similarly, the reference to the solar eclipse occurring in the middle of Ramadhan actually means *the middle of the three possible dates* which is 28th.

Lunar or Synodic month averages around 29.53 days. Due to the elliptical orbits of the earth and the moon, the actual length of the lunar month varies from 29.18 to 29.93 days. Since, for practical reasons, the number of days in a lunar month is always an integer, it is common practice to allocate either 29 or 30 full days to a lunar month. If the orbits of the

earth and the moon were completely circular, the lunar eclipse would always occur on the night of the full moon and the solar eclipse would also occur on a fixed day, at the time of the new moon. However, this is not the case. Not only are the orbits of the earth and the moon elliptical, causing variation in the length of a lunar month, but the start of any lunar month is also not exact due to atmospheric conditions that control the sighting of the new moon. This causes variation in the actual dates on which a lunar or solar eclipse can take place. An eclipse of the moon can occur on the 13th, 14th or 15th night of a lunar month near the time of the Full Moon. An eclipse of the sun can take place on the 27th, 28th or 29th day of the lunar month, near the time of the New Moon.

This heavenly sign was fulfilled during the time of the Promised Messiah^{as}, in exactly the way described in Dar Qutni's *Hadith*. The moon was eclipsed on the first of the three possible dates—the 13th of Ramaḍan, 1311 Hijra (corresponding to Wednesday March 21, 1894). The partial eclipse placed 24% of the moon under shadow and lasted 1 hour and 49 minutes. The lunar eclipse was visible in India, Europe and eastern United States of America. The sun was eclipsed on the middle of the three possible dates—the 28th of Ramaḍan (corresponding to April 6, 1894). It was a rare hybrid solar eclipse in which the eclipse started out as annular⁴², changing to total and then back to annular before it ended.

These eclipses were visible over a large part of Asia including India. The sign of the eclipses was repeated in 1895, this time visible in America. It should be noted that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} is the only person in history who has claimed this heavenly sign in support of his claim.

Thus, while the simple darkening of the sun and the moon in the form of eclipses had taken place innumerable times since the original prophecy of the New Testament, their manifestation in the manner in which they actually did at the advent of the Promised Messiah^{as} is explained fully by the *Hadith* quoted by Dar Qutni.

⁴² In an annular eclipse, the moon covers only the central part of the sun, leaving an annular ring shining around the eclipsed disc.

Referring to the eclipses as a sign for the truthfulness of his claim, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad—the Promised Messiah^{as}—writes in *Durr-e Samīn*:

Thou made the heavens a witness for my sake—
For me the sun and the moon became dim and dark.

(*Munājāt aur Tablīgh Haq*, couplet 16, *Durr-e Samīn Urdu*, page 150)

•

Who cries that even the heavens are crying with him?
The eyes of the sun and moon have dimmed and darkened with grief.
(*Munājāt aur Tablīgh Haq*, couplet 113, *Durr-e Samīn Urdu*, page 158)

•

In one of his Persian poems, the Promised Messiah^{as} writes:

By losing their lights during the eclipses,
The sun and moon fell into prostration in front of me.
The Gracious One showed this Sign in the heavens
And on the earth, too, He extended His fearsome Hand.
(*Durr-e Samīn Farsi*, page 331)

Chapter 9

FALLING OF STARS

In the context of the return of the Messiah^{as} in the Latter Days, the New Testament Gospel of Matthew states:

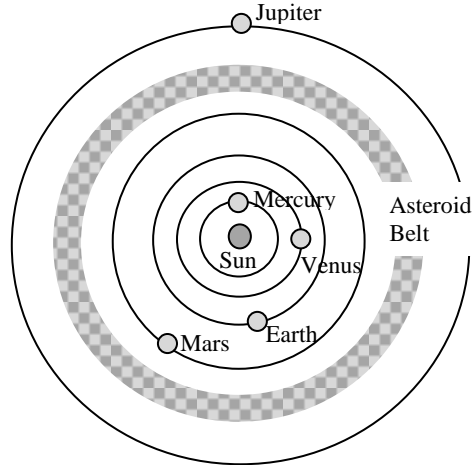
Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and **the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken;**

And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven... (Matthew 24:29-30)

And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. (Revelation 6:13)

WHAT ARE METEOR SHOWERS

The gravitational force of the earth continually pulls in part of the debris left behind in space after the formation of the solar system. This debris consists of asteroids, comets and rocks of various sizes—all the way down to dust particles. Most of these bodies exist in an asteroid belt that lies between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter. The comets may visit from beyond the orbit of Jupiter, usually in elliptical orbits with varying periodicities. [Astronomy 101]



Occasionally, the gravitational force of Jupiter and other planets disturb the normal course of these bodies. When these bodies are pulled in by earth's gravity and enter its atmosphere, they burn out due to extreme resistance with air and glow as meteors and shooting stars. Sometimes these

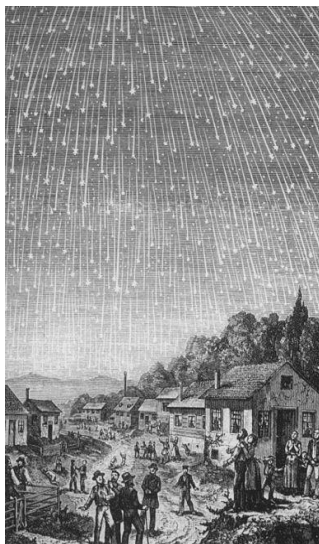
meteors appear singly and sometimes in the form of showers that appear to be originating from a certain part of the sky. Some of the most amazing displays of meteor showers take place when the earth—during its orbit around the sun—intersects the debris left behind by previously broken-up comets.

Although the appearance of meteor showers is a routine astronomical phenomenon that dates back to as long as earth has been around, there have been two occasions in recent history when they took on the aspect of dramatic and unusual displays.

METEOR SHOWER OF 1833

The first incident took place in 1833, two years prior to the birth of the Promised Messiah⁴³. Known as the Leonids—since the meteors appeared to be radiating from the Constellation Leo—the shower owed its existence to the break-up of the comet 55P/Tempel-Tuttle⁴³. The debris from the break-up of this comet was pulled in by the gravitational force of the earth.

During the 1833 Leonids meteor shower, more than a hundred thousand meteors were seen per hour (some estimates put the frequency at nearly two hundred thousand meteors per hour or 55 meteors per second)⁴⁴. At this high rate, the display would have appeared as if all the stars in the night sky were falling down. In the United States of



A famous depiction of the 1833 meteor storm, produced in 1889, for the Seventh Day Adventist book *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*. Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons and <http://star.arm.ac.uk/leonid>.

⁴³ The comet 55P/Tempel-Tuttle is a periodic comet that visits the sun every 33 years. Although discovered in 1865/1866, it had been observed earlier as far back as 1366 CE.

⁴⁴ “*The Great Leonid Meteor Storm of 1833 — A First-Hand Account by Elder Samuel Rogers*”, NASA Science News, June 22, 1999.

America, the meteor display was considered to be a literal fulfilment of the Biblical prophecy related to the return of Jesus Christ⁴⁵. The founder of Mormonism, Joseph Smith, noted in his journal that this event was a literal fulfilment of the word of God and a sure sign that the coming of Christ was close at hand⁴⁵.

The nineteenth century historian, R.M. Devens (1824-1901) writes in 1878 about the 1833 meteor shower⁴⁶:

“During the three hours of its continuance the day of judgment was believed to be only waiting for sunrise, and, long after the shower had ceased, the morbid and superstitious still were impressed with the idea that the final day was at least only a week ahead. Impromptu meetings for prayer were held in many places, and many other scenes of religious devotion, or terror, or abandonment of worldly affairs, transpired, under the influence of fear occasioned by so sudden and awful a display.”

The following account of the 1833 Leonids shower is given by Agnes Mary Clerke (1842-1907), an astronomy writer and historian:

“On the night of November 12-13, 1833, a tempest of falling stars broke over the Earth... The sky was scored in every direction with shining tracks and illuminated with majestic fireballs. At Boston, the frequency of meteors was estimated to be about half that of flakes of snow in an average snowstorm. Their numbers... were quite beyond counting; but as it waned, a reckoning was attempted, from which it was computed, on the basis of that much-diminished rate, that 240,000 must have been visible during the nine they continued to fall.”⁴⁷

⁴⁵ The Joseph Smith Papers, Journals Volume 1:1832-1839.

⁴⁶ *Our First Century: Being a Popular Descriptive Portraiture of the Hone Hundred Great and Memorable Events of Perpetual Interest in the History of Our Country, Political, Military, Mechanical, Social, Scientific and Commercial* (1880), R.M. Devens, C.A. Nichols & Co., Springfield, Mass.

⁴⁷ www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agnes—Mary—Clerke
www.adsabs.harvard.edu/full/1995JIMO...23..120R
www.history.mcs.st-asdrews.ac.uk/Biographies/Clerke.html

The Leonids meteor showers were observed again with less intensity in 1866, 1867 and 1868. Previous Leonids meteor storms attributed to the cyclical comet 55P/Tempel-Tuttle were observed in 1767 and 1799.

[For historical accounts of the 1833 Leonid meteor showers also see: Space.com: “*The 1833 Leonid Meteor Shower: A Frightening Flurry*”; “*The Great Leonid Meteor Storm of 1833—A first-hand account by Elder Samuel Rogers*”, NASA Science News, June 22, 1999; “*Falling Stars*”, Newbern Sentinel, New Bern, North Carolina, 6 December 1833, page 2; Olmsted, Denison (1833), “*Observations on the Meteors of November 13th, 1833*”, The American Journal of Science and Arts, 25: 363-411; Steven J. Dick (1998), “*Observation and interpretation of the Leonid meteors over the last millennium*”, Journal of Astronomical History and Heritage, 1 (1): 1-20; Mark Littmann (1999), “*The Heavens on Fire: The Great Leonid Meteor Storms*”, Cambridge University Press.

METEOR SHOWER OF 1872

The second magnificent display of a meteor shower during the life of the Promised Messiah^{as} took place on November 27, 1872⁴⁸. This shower is known as Andromedids since the meteors appeared to radiate from the Constellation Andromeda. The debris is believed to come from the comet 3D/Biela⁴⁹, which broke up in 1846. The frequency of the meteors was estimated at several thousand per hour (by



The Andromedid meteor storm on November 27, 1872, as portrayed in *Enciclopedia Moderna Illustrata*, published in Milan, Italy, in 1904. New York Public Library. [image copied from www.skyandtelescope.com]

⁴⁸ Source: Wikipedia and other on-line data on meteors, Leonids and Andromedids.

⁴⁹ 3D/Biela is a periodic comet that was first recorded in 1772. After its break up, its remnants have only been seen as meteor showers.

some as high as fifteen thousand per hour). The Chinese observers noted that “stars fell like rain”. In Italy, observers P.F. Denza and three others recorded about 33,400 meteors over a 6 ½ hour period.

In the book, *OMEGA: Last Days of the World* (1894)⁵⁰, Camille Flammarion (1842-1925), the French astronomer and author, describes the 1872 meteor shower in the following words:

“Recently, during the meteor shower of November 27, 1872, when the sky was filled with more than forty thousand meteorites belonging to the dispersed comet of Biela, women of the lower classes at Nice especially, as also at Rome, in their excitement sought information of those whom they thought able to explain the cause of these celestial fireworks, which they had at once associated with the end of the world and with the fall of the stars, which it was foretold would usher in that last great event.”

METEOR SHOWER OF 1885

The Andromedids appeared again in 1885 with several thousand meteors observed per hour. However, the display was not as intense as the previous one in 1872. In Burma, the meteor shower of 1885 was perceived as a fateful omen that led to the collapse of the Konbaung Dynasty⁵¹ that had created the second largest empire in the Burmese history. The meteor shower of November 1885 is also the first display of its kind that was recorded on film. The Austro-Hungarian astronomer, Ladislaus Weinek, was the first to photograph the event by recording short trails on a photographic plate at his Prague observatory.

The following news was published by Major A.C. Bigg Wither after observing the 1885 meteor showers at Quetta⁵²:

⁵⁰ University of Nebraska Press, 1999.

⁵¹ The Konbaung Dynasty was the last dynasty that ruled Burma (Myanmar) from 1752 to 1885.

⁵² Royal Astronomical Society; provided by the NASA Astrophysics Data System

“A grand display of meteors was seen at Quetta, Baluchistan (67° 5' E, 30° 12' N), on November 27, 1885. At 10 P.M., local time, the shower was incessant, and I estimated that over the whole visible hemisphere six or eight meteors in every second were falling at this time. The radiant-point was about half way between the three principal stars in *Aries* and *Cassiopeia*, in *Andromeda*, close to the well-known nebula; and as this part of the heavens was nearly in the zenith at this time, the meteor shower had, so to speak, a most symmetrical appearance. The meteors were mostly not very brilliant—on an average like stars of the 3rd magnitude, moving over arcs of 8° or 10°; but there were some brighter even than stars of the 1st magnitude. Unfortunately circumstances did not permit me to observe for more than a few minutes, and it was only accident that I saw the shower at all.”

The Meteor Shower of 1885, November 27

By Major A.C. Bigg Wither

Quetta, 1885, November 29

While individual meteors fall all the time and hardly any night is free from such occurrence, their incidence at high rates in the form of meteor showers and displays are indeed uncommon. The two of the greatest such occurrences took place in 1833 and 1872—around the advent of the Promised Messiah^{as}. These are very significant coincidences, particularly in the presence of the New Testament prophecy and the fact that the Promised messiah applied them to his own person.

The meteor display of 1833 had taken place a little before the birth of the Promised Messiah^{as}. The next spectacular display in 1872 took place prior to his commissioning. The third one in 1885 took place after his appointment. With respect to this third event of falling stars, the Promised Messiah^{as} writes in his book *A'īna Kamālāt Islam*:

I recall that early on, when I was appointed, I received the following revelation which is written on page 238 of *Brāhīn*: “Allah has placed blessing in you, O Ahmad. Whatever you did let loose, it was not you but it was Allah Who let it loose. Allah has taught you the Qur'an so that you should warn the people whose ancestors have not been warned, and that the way of the guilty ones might become manifest. Say: ‘I have been commissioned and I am the first of the believers’.”

After these revelations, many Signs began to be manifested. Thus, one of them was this that on the night of November 28, 1885—meaning the night before the date of November 28, 1885—there was such a display of meteors in the sky that I had never seen its like in my entire life. There were so many sparks flying in all directions in the sky that there is no example in the world so that I can explain it. I recall that at that time, this revelation was vouchsafed with great frequency that “Whatever you did let loose, it was not you but it was Allah Who let it loose.” So, this *letting loose* had great connection with the letting loose of the meteors.

This display of meteors which took place on the eve of November 28, 1885 was so widespread that it was published in the ordinary newspapers of Europe, America and Asia with great amazement. People may be wondering that it was without any purpose. However, God knows that the one drawing maximum pleasure and delight from this display was I. My eyes kept on looking at this display for a long time. That succession of falling stars started in the evening, which I kept on watching with great joy because of the revealed good news. This was so because it was revealed to my heart that “This Sign has manifested for you.”

(*A’ina Kamālāt Islam*, Footnote, pages 109-111, 1984 hardcover edition of *Rūḥānī Khazāin*)

Chapter 10

HATE AND KILLINGS

According to the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus warned his followers that upon his return, many shall be persecuted for their association with him. The actual words of Jesus^{as} go as follows:

“Then shall they **deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you:** and ye shall be **hated of all nations for my name’s sake.**” (Matthew 24:9)

“But before all these, **they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you,** delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, **being brought before kings and rulers for my name’s sake.**” (Luke 21:12)

And when he had opened the fifth seal, **I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:**

And they cried with a loud voice, saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?”

And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that **they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servant also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.** (Revelation 6:9-11)

In the context of hate and killing directed towards the followers of Jesus Christ^{as}, we shall first examine such incidents in early Christianity and then compare them with similar incidents after his return.

PERSECUTION OF EARLY CHRISTIANS

During Jesus’ own time, he and his followers were persecuted by the Jews as well as the Romans who occupied Israel and Palestine. These persecutions did not end when Jesus was hung on the cross but continued well into the fourth century CE when Christianity was finally legalised

under the Edict of Milan⁵³ in 313 CE and became the state religion of the Roman Empire.

The first imperially sanctioned persecutions of the Christians were carried out during 64-68 CE by the Roman Emperor Nero Claudius Caesar (37-68 CE). A fire that burned much of Rome in 64 CE was blamed on the Christians with the result that many Christians were seized, tortured and then executed publicly. For the next two centuries, the persecution of Christians took place only sporadically. While Christianity during this period still did not receive a legal status, the followers themselves were seldom killed for simply being Christian. Under the imperial decree from Emperor Hadrian (76-138 CE), who ruled from 117 to 138 CE, Christians could not be condemned for simply following their faith.

The most extensive persecutions of early Christians took place during the reigns of Diocletian (244-312 CE) who reigned from 284-305 CE, and Galerius (260-311 CE) who reigned from 305 to 311 CE. Both were emperors of the Roman Empire. After the issuance of a series of royal edicts that banned Christian practices and forced them to make sacrifices to Roman gods, several tens of thousands of Christians were seized and executed. Interestingly, Christians were labelled as atheists for not believing in or worshipping Roman gods.

PERSECUTIONS AFTER THE PROMISED MESSIAH'S ADVENT

According to Jesus' warnings as stated in the Gospel of Matthew, such persecutions shall take place again upon his return. The history of religions shows that persecution of God's appointees is the rule rather than an exception. Practically, every prophet in history faced opposition from his contemporaries and some had to flee their homes for fear of their lives. One could ask the question that if such has been the pattern in history, then what was so special about the persecution of Jesus' followers during his second coming. The answer to this question, as we shall detail below, is that the

⁵³ A proclamation that legalised Christianity within the Roman Empire. It was made in Milan after an agreement was reached between the Roman Emperors Constantine I and Licinius in 313 CE.

persecutions in the Latter Days were to reach extraordinary proportions and degree.

While the Promised Messiah^{as} was strongly opposed during his own life by the Muslim clergy and some overzealous Christian missionaries, much of the real opposition, discrimination and persecution were to come later for his community of followers. During the lifetime of the Promised Messiah, only two of his followers were martyred, both in Afghanistan. Maulawi Abdur-Rahman was martyred in 1901 followed by Sahibzada Abdul Latif in 1903.

After the demise of the Promised Messiah, persecutions of Ahmadis continued in Afghanistan with the result that from 1917 to 1939, nine more Ahmadis were martyred in Afghanistan.

Due to the presence of the British rule in India, the Ahmadis enjoyed a period of relative security in the country with only three martyrdoms taking place during 1940-1942. Then, at the time of the partition of the subcontinent in 1947, much of the peace and order was destroyed and some 32 Ahmadis were killed in India because of their faith.

After the creation of Pakistan, Ahmadis faced two distinct periods of heavy persecutions. The first came in 1953 when nationwide riots erupted against the Ahmadiyya community leading to looting of Ahmadi shops and homes and the forced removal from office of the Ahmadi Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Chaudhry Zafrulla Khan^{ra}.

The second phase of severe opposition of Ahmadis began in 1974 when the Government of Pakistan made the Second Amendment⁵⁴ to the Constitution of Pakistan declaring that Ahmadis were no longer Muslims in the eyes of the law. After this discriminatory regulation, Ahmadis were not given promotions above certain ranks in the civil service or the armed forces of the country. At the same time, the state-sponsored regulations provided a free licence to the public to discriminate against and even kill the

⁵⁴ Promulgated on September 7, 1974, the exact text of the amendment reads: "A person who does not believe in the absolute and unqualified finality of the Prophethood of Muhammad (peace be upon him), the last of the Prophets or claims to be a Prophet, in any sense of the word or of any description whatsoever, after Muhammad (peace be upon him), or recognizes such a claimant as a Prophet or religious reformer, is not a Muslim for the purpose of the Constitution or law."

Ahmadis. The Government regulation disallowed the Ahmadis to call themselves Muslims or carry out any activity that could portray them as such. The violation of these regulations has been dealt with very severely. The religious schools or *Madrassas* in Pakistan are hotbeds for anti Ahmadiyya teachings and propaganda.

On April 26, 1984, the President of Pakistan, General Ziaul-Haq, issued the anti-Ahmadiyya Ordinance XX, which prohibited the Ahmadis from professing their faith or preaching their religion or using Islamic texts for praying purposes or usage of Islamic terms and titles for themselves. Even a public explanation of their true beliefs was considered a violation of the Ordinance. Under this regulation, Ahmadis cannot call their places of worship “mosques”, or perform the call to Prayer, or publicly quote from their Holy Book—the Holy Qur’an. This Ordinance is separate from the Second Amendment to the Constitution of Pakistan. While the Second Amendment declared that Ahmadis were non-Muslims, the Ordinance prohibited them from identifying themselves as Muslims.

With this Ordinance in place, Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad^{ra}, the Fourth Khalifa of the Promised Messiah^{as}, felt that he was unable to perform his duties as leader of the community and migrated to England on April 29, 1984. During his period of exile, the headquarters of the Ahmadiyya community was moved from Rabwah, Pakistan, to London, England.

During the four years following the implementation of the Ordinance, some 3,000 cases were registered against the Ahmadis for various violations of the regulation. In six cases, the Ahmadis were sentenced to 25-year imprisonments and in four cases they were sentenced to death. No executions, however, have actually been carried out. The United Nations Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities has repeatedly called on the Government of Pakistan to repeal Ordinance XX.

In 1986, the Government added the blasphemy supplement to the existing law that gave free licence to the state as well as to the public to arrest Ahmadis on the pretext that they have somehow blasphemed the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa} or the religion of Islam. Penalties under the blasphemy regulation range from a fine to death. From 1987 to 2014, more than 1,300 people have been accused of violating this regulation. Over sixty persons who were accused of blasphemy were murdered before their court

trials were even concluded. Anyone who opposed the blasphemy law has been assassinated.

The Government of Pakistan and the local Muslim clergies have been quite successful in exporting their anti-Ahmadiyya sentiments to other Islamic countries such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Malaysia, Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Indonesia. Practically all Islamic countries have declared Ahmadis as non-Muslims in sympathy with Pakistan law.

A list of Ahmadi martyrs is given below for India and Pakistan and for the surrounding countries of Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Indonesia.

Table 9
Number of Ahmadis Martyred in India, Pakistan and Surrounding Countries
[Source: thepersecution.org/facts/martyred.html and
thepersecutionofahmadis.org]

Period	Number of Martyrs	Country
1901-1903	2	Afghanistan
1917-1939	9	Afghanistan
1940-1945	3	India
	11	Indonesia
1947 (partition)	32	India
1948-1949	12	Kashmir
1950-1957	13	Pakistan
	6	Indonesia
	3	Afghanistan
1963-1969	2	Bangladesh
	4	Pakistan
1974	29	Pakistan
1978-1979	3	Pakistan
	1	India
	1	Sri Lanka
1982-1990	1	U.S.A.
	26	Pakistan
1992-2000	35	Pakistan
	1	Uganda

	7 1	Bangladesh India
2001-2009	54 1 1	Pakistan Bangladesh Sri Lanka
2010	100 ⁵⁵	Pakistan
2011	3 5	Indonesia Pakistan
2012	20	Pakistan
2013	5	Pakistan
2014	11	Pakistan

Since the demise of the Promised Messiah^{as}, some 400 Ahmadis have been martyred in India, Pakistan and the surrounding countries. In Addition, several hundred Ahmadis have been wrongfully imprisoned under charges of pretending to be Muslims, preaching their faith, possessing Ahmadiyya literature or blaspheming the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa}. Hundreds of Ahmadi homes and shops have been looted under the eyes of the Pakistani police and practically all Ahmadis live under constant threat of violation of their basic human rights. For obtaining such basic documents such as national ID cards, passports, and admissions to educational institutions, Pakistani citizens are forced to sign a statement that they regard Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} as an imposter and a liar. Throughout history, many religious communities have been persecuted for holding views that were somehow different from those of the majority population. However, such state-sponsored opposition of a prophet that is taking place more than a century after the prophet's demise has no like in the annals of religious history.

There is such discrimination against Ahmadis in Pakistan that Professor Abdus Salam (1926-1996), who comes from Pakistan and is the first Muslim physicist to win the Nobel Prize, in 1979, is completely disowned by the country. In like manner, Pakistan history books have been amended

⁵⁵ Out of the total, 87 were martyred in one day on May 28, 2010 in two Ahmadi mosques. In addition, some 108 Ahmadis were injured.

to remove the name of Chaudhry Zafrulla Khan as the first Foreign Minister of the country.

Persecution of Ahmadis is not limited to Pakistan alone. In Indonesia, the top Islamic body declared some 400,000 Ahmadis living in that country as “deviant”. The members of the Ahmadiyya community are routinely terrorised and their prayers and activities banned in many areas.

In Saudi Arabia, Ahmadis are officially banned from performing the Pilgrimage or Hajj.

In 2009, the Islamic Religious Council of Malaysia forbade the Ahmadis from offering their Friday Prayer in their central mosque and posted a sign outside the mosque stating that “*Qadiani [Ahmadiyyat] is not Islam.*”

In India, while the Government regards Ahmadis as Muslims and allows them to practise their faith, discrimination of Ahmadis continues by members of other Islamic sects.

State-sponsored discrimination of Ahmadis is practised in many other countries such as Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Egypt and Gambia.

The Ahmadis face all this opposition, discrimination and persecution for simply belonging to the sect founded by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} of Qadian. In many parts of Pakistan, the moniker “Ahmadi”, Qadiani—or its derogatory form, “Mirzai”—are almost a death sentence to the individual. All three appellations are linked to the name of the community’s founder, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani^{as}. This is a grand fulfilment of the Gospel prophecy wherein Jesus^{as} tells his followers that on his return “**Ye shall be hated of all nations for my name’s sake.**” (Matthew 24:9)

Another point to note is that in the area of hate and killing, we have not seen the end yet. While many Ahmadis have been martyred to date, the overall numbers are nowhere close to what the early Christians endured. As the prophecy of Revelation 6:11 indicates, perhaps many more martyrdoms are slated in the future.

Chapter 11

GOSPEL PREACHED IN THE ENTIRE WORLD

Another end-time prophecy that exists in the Gospel of Matthew relates to the preaching of the Gospel to the entire world. As Jesus^{as} states:

And this **gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world** for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. (Matthew 24:14)

SPREAD OF EARLY CHRISTIANITY

During the life of Jesus Christ, practically all the Christians were of Jewish origin and the original message was conveyed to the people in the Aramaic language. This situation lasted for only a few years until Jesus was put on the cross in 30 CE. After Jesus' survival from crucifixion and his departure in search of the Lost Tribes⁵⁶ of Israel, the spreading of the Gospel was entrusted to the close disciples of Jesus^{as} known as the Apostles.

The Apostolic period of the spread of Christianity lasted until the death of the last Apostle in 100 CE. The Apostolic period was followed by Ante-Nicene period which lasted until 325 CE when the First Council of Nicaea was held by Christian bishops under the patronage of the Roman Emperor Constantine I. During the Apostolic and Ante-Nicene periods, other

⁵⁶ The Lost Tribes of Israel were ten of the twelve tribes that were exiled after conquests by the Assyrians in 722 BCE and by the Babylonians in 587 BCE. Taken away by the conquerors, these tribes settled down in Mesopotamia and the area east of it. When the Persian king Cyrus II conquered Babylon in 539 BC, he liberated the exiled Jews and allowed them to return to their homeland. However, many Jews decided to continue living where they were. For a long time, the whereabouts of these tribes were not known and they have been frequently referred to as the Lost Tribes. Modern research into the subject has shown the presence of members of these presumably lost tribes in Afghanistan and Kashmir.

languages such as Koine⁵⁷ Greek were also used for communicating the message of Jesus^{as}. It was also during these periods that Gospel teachings began to be preached to the gentiles⁵⁸ throughout the Hellenistic region and even beyond the borders of the Roman Empire. While early Christianity appeared as a sect of Judaism, this perspective changed by the end of the first century CE when it began to be recognised as a separate religion—both internally among the Christians as well as externally in the world around them.

Early Christianity emerged in Jerusalem and gradually spread to the adjoining areas of Levant⁵⁹, Aram⁶⁰, Ethiopia, Assyria, Mesopotamia, Phoenicia⁶¹, Asia Minor, Jordan, Egypt, Armenia, Georgia and throughout the region of the Roman Empire.

During the Middle Ages (from the fifth to fifteenth centuries CE), Christianity spread throughout Europe. Then, during the Age of Exploration and Colonisation beginning with the European Renaissance, the Christian faith spread throughout the rest of the world. According to the Pew Report, Christianity today is the largest religion of the world with a following of some 2.2 billion persons or nearly one-third of the world's population.

TRANSLATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF THE BIBLE⁶²

The Bible is the most translated book in the world. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the entire Bible had been translated into practically every important language and dialect of the world. The linguists estimate

⁵⁷ “Common Greek” that was the lingua franca in the Mediterranean region.

⁵⁸ The word “gentiles” is used largely for non-Israelite and non-Jewish people.

⁵⁹ Levant covers eastern Mediterranean region.

⁶⁰ The Aram region of the Bible coincides with present day central Syria, including the city of Aleppo.

⁶¹ The historic region of Phoenicia covers present day Lebanon, Israel, Jordan, Gaza and Syria.

⁶² For the various statistics on Bible translations see: www.wycliffenz.org; www.biblica.com; www.joshuaproject.net.

that there are about 6,500 languages in the world. However, some 2,000 of these languages have less than a thousand persons who speak it⁶³.

It is reported that as of 2016, the entire Bible has been translated into 554 languages with about 2,932 languages having at least some portion of the Bible translated into them. The New Testament has been translated into 1,333 languages. The Wycliffe Bible Translators report their translation project aims at completing the Bible translations in the remaining 1,800 important languages of the world by 2025 which will reach an additional 180 million persons.

The Bible Society estimates that during the 160 year period from 1815 to 1975, approximately 2.5 billion copies of the Bible were printed. According to the British paper, *The Economist*, some 100 million copies of the Bible are sold or distributed free of charge every year.⁶⁴

With the Bible being printed in such large quantities and the efforts of the Christian churches likely outweighing the combined efforts of the religious institutions of all other faiths combined, the prophecy of the New Testament appears to be clearly fulfilled that **“Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world”**.

⁶³ The top 100 languages of the world are spoken by 5.6 billion persons as their first language. This represents some 85% of the world population.

⁶⁴ www.brandongaille.com/27-good-bible-sales-statistics/

Chapter 12

GATHERING OF GOD'S ELECT

The Gospel of Matthew prophesies the gathering of God's elect at the time of Jesus' return in the Latter Days:

“And He shall send His angels with great sound of a trumpet, and *they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*” (Matthew 24:31)

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The history of religions is witness to the fact that as the messengers of God appear in the world, noble and pious spirits converge upon them as if drawn in by some invisible force. Early Islamic history is a perfect example of this phenomenon and the history of Jesus' return is a perfect case-in-point that history repeats itself.

Islam is perhaps the only religion that has laid great emphasis on good companionship. The Holy Qur'an and the Traditions of the Prophet Muhammad^{sa} speak of good companionship both as a reward from God and as a requirement for one's spiritual advancement. It is a mutually beneficial relationship in which the believers strengthen their own bonds of brotherly love and affection while walking, all together on the path to their Creator. All prophets have been blessed with good companions to help spread the divine teachings and become role models for the general population. At the same time, these companions benefited from their close association with the prophets and absorbed the light of spirituality and godliness directly from the divinely appointed teachers.

Some of the greatest Muslims that ever graced the pages of Islamic history were those who were personally trained by the Prophet Muhammad^{sa} and benefited from his own company, supervision and example. As the Prophet Muhammad^{sa} said:

أصحابي كالنجوم بأيهم اقتديتم اهتديتم

“My Companions are like stars;
whomever you follow, you will be guided.”

COMPANIONS OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH^{AS}

Likewise, the Companions of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad—the Promised Messiah^{as}—outshine other Ahmadi Muslims in their sincerity, devoutness, piety and sacrifices. They dyed themselves in the hue of the Promised Messiah’s own spirituality and elegantly reflected the traits and attributes that he possessed.

As the prophecy of Matthew clearly states, the gathering of God’s elect around the returning Jesus^{as} will in fact be carried out by God’s angels who would move the attention and hearts of the pious people towards God’s appointee.

The Companions of the Promised Messiah^{as} were like a varied assortment of precious pearls and gems. Some excelled in their spiritual station while some were also blessed with worldly honours; some were given to extreme humbleness and humility while some towered over others in the intensity of their love for their spiritual master; some possessed great literary acumen and penmanship while some, having no formal education, were endowed generously with the knowledge of God; some laid down their lives in their youth for the sake of the Movement while some were blessed with long years of fruitful contribution to the cause. In short, each Companion was unique and exceptional in some way or another.

A few of the Companions had professional degrees and served in important positions in the secular world. A few others possessed some degrees but worked mostly for the Ahmadiyya Movement. A vast number of the Companions, however, had no formal college degrees—a common measure of being considered “educated” in many cultures—and consequently little worldly positions worth mentioning. One common denominator among all the Companions, however, was clearly their recognition of the truth of the Promised Messiah’s claims and the courage to openly accept him despite considerable opposition and hardships. The other obvious feature that all the Companions shared was their extreme

degree of spiritual enlightenment and the extent of their experiences in the form of true dreams, revelations, visions and the acceptance of their prayers.

An overview of the lives of the Promised Messiah's Companions clearly shows that they all leaned heavily towards mysticism. True mysticism requires that one carries out all the duties in the religion of Islam under the impetus of the love of God. Of course the greatest mystic of that period was the Promised Messiah^{as} himself. Anointed by God, the Promised Messiah^{as} possessed that God-given touch which allowed him to breathe divine life into others.

It is the usual practice of the men of God and saintly persons to generally hide their true spiritual achievements and experiences. Thus, what we know of their dreams, visions and revelations, is only a small part of what the Companions were truly blessed with. Even so, reading about their accounts leaves us struck with wonder and amazement, that if they themselves were such, just how splendourous was the life of their spiritual master—the Promised Messiah^{as}. Carrying this analogy a little further, one cannot even begin to surmise as to the true greatness of the Prophet^{sa} of Islam whose servant was the Promised Messiah^{as}. As a poet has said:

After all, a tree is only recognised by its fruit—
As a proof, one only has to look at the servants of
Muhammad!

Illuminating their persons with the light of spirituality, the resplendent lives of the Companions of the Promised Messiah^{as} did much to repel the gloom and darkness of the late nineteenth century. Along with their spiritual master, the Promised Messiah^{as}, the lives of the Companions act as ideal role models for those travelling on the path of love unto the Beloved.

The true status and significance of the Companions of the Promised Messiah^{as} is beautifully summed up by Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih the Second^{ra}:

“Those people who served the Promised Messiah^{as} in the early days are such persons that act like amulets and are security for the world. These persons, who believed in the Promised Messiah^{as}, were way above the ordinary level. They were blessed by God to be the Companions of the

Reformer and Messenger of the Latter Days. The spectacles of their intense love are such that the world may not witness for centuries.

“There is no one wiser than the person who has found God and His Messenger through love and has forged his person with theirs through devotion. Now, nothing can separate him from God—and God from him—because the warmth of love has bonded them together like a weld. Therefore, you inculcate love in yourselves and follow the way that these persons followed...”⁶⁵

⁶⁵ Excerpt taken from the book: *Hazrat Maulana Sher Ali* by Malik Nazeer Ahmad Riaz, 1955, pages 390-391; original reference from *Al-Fazl*, volume 29, Number 196.

Chapter 13

ADVENT OF JESUS IN THE EAST

The Gospel of Matthew makes a very interesting remark regarding the return of Jesus^{as}:

“For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.” (Matthew 24:27)

Although not stating explicitly that Jesus’ return shall take place in the east, the prophecy uses an interesting simile with reference to the sun’s light spreading from the east and shining on to the west.

Very interestingly, a similar prophecy exists in the Traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa} that mentions the appearance of Jesus^{as} to the east of Jerusalem.

The advent of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} in Qadian fulfils both the New Testament as well as the Hadith prophecies. The New Testament prophecy also alludes to the fact that the West shall gain light from the teachings of the Promised Messiah^{as}.

Although much of the West follows the Christian faith, the importance of Christianity within the society is no more than a cultural ritual. There is little emphasis on spirituality and the daily life follows materialistic imperatives and pleasantries. The moral fibre is at an all-time low and liberal attitude towards cohabitation, drugs and drinking is taking its toll in the form of unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases and family break-ups. The Western society indeed stands at the pinnacle of scientific and technological achievements. However, in terms of modesty, chastity and spirituality, it sits in an abyss.

The Western world faces a very unusual dilemma today. The theology of its religion—in the form in which it has been shaped by the Church—is perhaps the least defensible of any major religion in the world today. The deification of human beings was acceptable among the early Romans and the Greeks. Today, however, it amounts to no more than a myth. Deification of human beings is perhaps the most common distortion in the history and

culture of many peoples in the world. Nevertheless, the western nations have clung to this mythological belief because it did not find any better religion around. The picture of Islam that it saw in the world was defaced through centuries of encrustation of un-Islamic customs, beliefs and practices. This, however, has changed now.

The advent of the Promised Messiah^{as} has opened just that avenue for the West to follow. Thanks to his untiring efforts and prayers, the religion of Islam now shines again with its pristine beauty and splendour. The emphasis that had gradually shifted towards empty ritual and baseless fables is now redirected towards cementing a bond of love with God, the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa} and with God's vast creation. Despite its superior position in the world in terms of political power and economic influence, the West can learn a lot from the true teachings of Islam. Perhaps this is what Jesus meant when he used the simile in Matthew 24:27: **"For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."**

Chapter 14

NO ONE KNOWS THE TIME OF ADVENT

Jesus^{as} Christ prophesied in the New Testament that the actual time of his return is known only to God. As it states in the Gospel of Matthew:

But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.”
(Matthew 24:36)

PREDICTIONS ABOUT THE RETURN OF THE MESSIAH

While many signs and circumstances of his return are indeed clearly prophesied in the New Testament, the actual time of his return was apparently meant to be sudden. This, however, did not stop several noted Christians from predicting the actual date of Jesus’ return. Throughout Christian history, people have been making claims and fixing the date of the Messiah’s appearance. The makers of such prophecies go as far back as the year 500 CE. Some of these very early claimants included:⁶⁶

- Hippolytus of Rome (170-235 CE)⁶⁷, who predicted the date as 500 CE;
- Beatus of Liebana (730-800 CE), who predicted the date as 793 CE;
- Pope Sylvester II (946-1003), who predicted the date of 1000 CE, the beginning of the second millennium;

⁶⁶ For predictions about the return of Jesus, see:

www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Predictions_and_claims_for_the_second_coming_of_Christ

⁶⁷ Along with two other theologians named Sextus Julius Africanus (160-240 CE) and Irenaeus (130-202 CE).

- Joachim of Fiore (1135-1202), who predicted that the Millennium⁶⁸ will begin between 1200 and 1260 CE;
- Jean de Roquetaillade (1310-1366), who predicted the start of the Millennium during 1368-1370;
- Sandro Botticelli (1445-1510), who predicted the beginning of the Millennium on 1500 CE;
- Thomas Muntzer (1489-1525), an Anabaptist theologian of the early Reformation, who predicted the beginning of the Millennium in 1525 CE;
- John Wesley (1703-1791), the founder of the Methodist Church, prophesied the beginning of the Millennium in 1836;

As stated before, fixing the date of the Messiah's appearance has been a fairly common practice in Christian history. However, beginning with the nineteenth century, the return of Jesus Christ^{as} took on the aspect of great imminence. Some of the notable prophesiers of this event include:

- William Miller (1782-1849) was an American preacher who started the Millerites movement. He claimed that Jesus would return between March 21, 1843 and March 21, 1844—between the spring equinoxes of 1843 and 1844 in the northern hemisphere. After Jesus did not materialise as predicted, many Millerites were terribly disappointed and left the movement.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ In Christian theology, the Millennium is a 1000 year period designated as a Golden Age or Paradise-on-earth, during which Jesus Christ will reign after his return prior to the final judgment.

⁶⁹ Dick, Everett N. (1994), *William Miller and the Advent Crisis*, Berrien Spring, Andrews University Press. Knight, George R. (1993), *Millennial Fever and the End of the World*, Boise, ID: Pacific Press.

- John Wroe (1782-1863), was a British evangelist who founded the Christian Israelite Church and predicted that the Millennium will begin in 1863;
- Joseph Smith Jr. (1805-1844) was an American religious leader who founded Mormonism and Latter Day Saint movements. Joseph Smith predicted that Jesus would appear in February 1891.⁷⁰
- After the failure of Miller's prediction, a colleague of his by the name of Samuel Snow (1806-1890) revised the date of Jesus' arrival as that of October 22, 1844. This, too, met with gross disappointment.⁷¹
- Another Millerite Adventist, Nelson H. Barbour⁷² (1824-1905) set a new date for the appearance of Jesus in 1873. Initially, he collaborated with Charles Taze Russell. In 1871, he published a book titled *Evidences for the Coming of the Lord in 1873, or The Midnight Cry*.
- Class Epp Jr. (1838-1913), a Russian Mennonite minister living in Central Asia, predicted that Christ would return on March 8, 1889. In anticipation of Jesus' arrival, Epp and his band of followers moved to Tashkent—the expected meeting place with the returning Messiah. When the predicted date came and no one descended from Heaven, Epp adjusted the date of appearance of Christ as 1891.

⁷⁰ *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, volume VI. Bushman, Richard Lyman (2005), *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf. Vogel, Dan (2004), *Joseph Smith: The Making of a Prophet*, Salt Lake City, UT: Signature Books. Quinn, D. Michael (1994), *The Mormon Hierarchy: Origins of Power*, Salt Lake City: Signature Books.

⁷¹ Francis D. Nichol, *The Midnight Cry*, Takoma Park, MD: Review and Herald, 1944.

⁷² Schulz and deVienne, *Nelson Barbour: The Millennium's Forgotten Prophet*, 2009.

Eventually, this date passed, too, and Epp's following began to dwindle and he passed away in 1913.⁷³

- Charles Taze Russell (1852-1916), the first president of the Watchtower Society of the Jehovah's Witnesses, had initially collaborated with Nelson Barbour but later split away from him. He continued his own research in setting a date for the arrival of Jesus. He founded the Bible Student Movement from which the present-day group, Jehovah's Witnesses, later arose. Russell believed that Christ had actually returned invisibly in 1874 and had been ruling from the heavens. He predicted that Jesus would come to earth and take his power in 1914.⁷⁴
- The Catholic Apostolic Church that was founded in 1831 in England predicted that Jesus shall return when the last of its twelve founding members died. The last member of the Society died in 1901.

THE ACTUAL APPEARANCE OF THE MESSIAH

It is very interesting to note that while all the predictions turned out to be incorrect in the manner the makers of these predictions were hoping, the apparent importance given to the nineteenth century for the Messiah's return turned out to be correct. Nevertheless, the actual appearance of the returning Messiah in a remote hamlet of Qadian in India was definitely very sudden and unexpected.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} spent his childhood and youth practically unknown to the outside world. While most young people of his time were preparing themselves for a lucrative occupation, he spent his time

⁷³ See: Bartsch, Franz and Richard D. Thiessen (2005), *Epp, Class (1838-1913)*, Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopeida Online; Duech, A.J., *Claas Epp and the Great Trek Reconsidered*, Journal of Mennonite Studies 3 (1985): 138-147; Juhnke, James C., *Rethinking the Great Trek*, Mennonite Life 62, no. 2 (2007).

⁷⁴ Encyclopaedia Britannica. Parkinson, James, *The Bible Student Movement in the Days of CT Russel*, 1975. Penton, M. James (1997), *Apocalypse Delayed: The Story of Jehovah's Witnesses*, University of Toronto Press.

in worship, meditation and the study of religious books. His reclusiveness was so obvious and his dedication to religion so intense that he earned the moniker of “mosque-dweller” from his father and other elders around him.

Ever so gradually, however, his fame as a scholar began to spread in the land of India. Always active in the defence of Islam against the Christian missionaries and the Arya pundits, he came to be regarded as a champion of Islam. The publication of his landmark book, *Brāhīn Ahmadiyya*, further consolidated his image as a religious scholar and defender of Islam.

Over the rest of his life, he went on to write more than eighty books in Urdu, Arabic and Persian languages. In addition, he published numerous poster announcements and penned countless personal letters. All his writings were designed to awaken the spirit of the people and to bring them towards righteous living, compassion for humanity, and worship of one God. He laboured day and night in this effort and spent the remaining time in prayers and supplications.

By 1882, he had realised that he had been appointed by God to revive and rejuvenate the faith and later made the claim to be the *Mujaddid* of the fourteenth century of Islam. Then, after being intimated by God, he made the claim around 1890 that he represented the metaphoric return of Jesus Christ^{as}. The ancient prophet, he explained, had died and all prophecies of his return could only be fulfilled by the coming of someone else with like traits and attributes. He explained clearly that his station as the returning Messiah remained subordinate to the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa} to whom he gave full allegiance as he had neither brought any new Law nor initiated any new religion.

The idea of someone other than the ancient Jesus^{as} son of Mary returning as the latter-day Messiah was considered extremely radical not only among the Muslims but also among the Christians. Consequently, he was promptly labelled a heretic and a pretender.

The first inkling among the people that the times were right for the appearance of the Messiah came through two sets of heavenly signs. The first was the striking meteor showers of 1833, 1872 and 1885 that clearly appeared to fulfil the New Testament prophecy regarding the “falling of stars”. Several publications in America and Europe alluded to this fact. The second set of heavenly signs related to the eclipses of the sun and the moon, on designated dates, during the month of Ramaḍan in 1894. Again, several

Muslim publications noted this fact and connected it to the advent of the Mahdi according to the Hadith of Dar Qutni⁷⁵.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} is the only person in history who has applied these two heavenly Signs (the falling of stars and the eclipses in the month of Ramaḍan) to his own person. While opposition continued to come from Christians and Muslims at large, honest and pious souls started to accept him and began to converge upon the peaceful hamlet of Qadian. In no time at all, a definite movement took birth and the spread of the Promised Messiah's message and teachings began in a systematic manner. Thus, the returning Messiah, in the person of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, dawned rather suddenly in the land of India fulfilling the New Testament prophecy.

⁷⁵ For the actual Hadith of Dar Qutni, refer to the Section on The Darkening of the Sun and Moon in this book.

Chapter 15

END-TIME APOSTASY

The word “apostasy” literally means the giving up or desertion of one’s belief and religion. It is also synonymous with abandonment of previously held loyalty with one’s faith. The New Testament prophesies the decline of moral values in the Latter Days known generally by the term “End-time Apostasy”.

The actual words of the various prophecies related to End-time apostasy go as follows:

“And because **iniquity shall abound**, the love of many shall wax cold.
(Matthew 24:12)

Let no man deceive you by any means; for **that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first**, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;
(2 Thessalonians 2:3)

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that **in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils:**

Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with hot iron;
(1 Timothy 4:1-2)

This know also, that in the last days, perilous times shall come.

For men shall be **lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parent, unthankful, unholy,**

Without natural affection, **trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,**

Traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away.

For this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with diverse lusts,

Ever learning, and **never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.**

Now as Jannes and Jambres⁷⁶ withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: **men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.**

(2 Timothy 3:1-8)

For the time will come when **they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers**, having itching ears;

And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

(2 Timothy 4:3-4)

Perhaps there has never been a time in this world when moral corruption and turpitude did not exist in our societies. With the appearance of prophets and men of God, the moral situation only improved temporarily. In the aftermath of these infrequent prophetic episodes, people reverted to their old immoral ways. The question then arises as to what is special about the apostasy and immorality that was prophesied for the Latter Days.

No one would deny the fact that the past one hundred and fifty years—coinciding with the advent of the Promised Messiah^{as}—have been fraught with irreligion, promiscuity, materialism, corruption and defiance of elders in our society. Most notably, the spiritual corruption of today is such that atheism, promiscuity and general materialism are applauded and not condemned—a situation, which has never existed before in the world. It is not simply that immorality exists in our societies but the fact that being immoral and being irreligious is considered good and acceptable.

A modern Christian writer, Ron Rhodes, comments on the moral situation in the United States of America—the leader of the Western Civilisation today—in the following words:

⁷⁶ Jannes and Jambres were two Egyptian sorcerers in Israelite history around the time of the Exodus.

“Here is a question to ponder: If what we are witnessing in America today—pornography, premarital sex, extramarital sex, widespread homosexuality, same-sex marriages, abortions, drinking, drugs, divorce, the disintegration of the family unit, and the like—were taking place in ancient Babylon, would you think that Babylon was ripe for judgment? I think so! The problem today is that many in our country have become desensitized to moral issues because immorality is so rampant. That is a dangerous state to be in, for God’s patience will not last forever.”⁷⁷

In the same book, Ron Rhodes adds:

“Without a doubt, America is engulfed in a moral crisis. The moral fiber of this country is eroding before our very eyes, and if the trend continues, it is only a matter of time before the country capitulates.

“Today there is widespread acceptance of homosexuality. Abortion—even the barbaric practice of partial-birth abortion—continues to be widely practiced, with some 50 million unborn babies having been murdered since the enactment of *Roe v. Wade* in 1973. Pornography is pervasive and freely available on the Internet, enslaving millions as sex addicts.

“Drug abuse and alcoholism are pervasive as well among both teenagers and adults. Promiscuity, fornication, and adultery continue to escalate to ever new heights, bringing about the carnage of sexually transmitted diseases.

“Meanwhile, the family unit is disintegrating before our eyes. The divorce rate is around 50 percent, and many today are living together outside of marriage. Out-of-wedlock births have escalated to new highs, with 40 percent of women not being married when they give birth. As well, gay couples are adopting children, raising them in a homosexual atmosphere.

“People are far more interested in happiness than in holiness. They yearn more for pleasure than for praising God. Humanism, materialism, and hedonism reign in the end times!”⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Ron Rhodes, in *“The End Times in Chronological Order”*, 2012, p-36.

⁷⁸ Ron Rhodes, in *“The End Times in Chronological Order”*, 2012, pages 103-104.

Chapter 15

SOME UNIQUE CONDITIONS AT THE TIME OF MESSIAH'S ADVENT

There are some aspects related to the second coming of Jesus^{as} that are not mentioned in the New Testament. These aspects relate to the country of his return, the political conditions at the time, and the taking place of numerous discoveries and inventions that make the time of his advent truly unusual in the history of the world. Below, we briefly deal with some of these aspects.

PREPARATION OF THE LAND OF INDIA

The coming of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} at the head of the fourteenth century of Islam was like a spring breeze and a morning drizzle, which restored the greenery and fragrance of a once splendid and most perfumed garden that had fallen victim to the vagaries of time and had almost withered away and nearly dried up. The process of intensive and widespread Divine communication commenced once again, and the world entered the Latter Days of Islamic glory promised in the Holy Qur'an and the Traditions of the Prophet Muhammad^{sa}.

However, preparations for the advent of this promised reformer had started in India a long time before his actual appearance. Islam was originally brought to this country some thirteen centuries ago by people accompanying Muhammad bin Qāsim⁷⁹ in 711 C.E. For a long time since then, most of the great scholars, thinkers and Sufis of Islam were confined strictly to the western part of the Muslim Empire—extending from Afghanistan to the Atlantic Ocean, covering much of the Middle East and North Africa. It was only during the past millennium that many Muslim scholars and Sufis either moved to India or were actually born there.

⁷⁹ Muhammad bin Qasim was a general during the Umayyad Caliphate who conquered Sindh and Multan regions of India. He learned warfare and governance from his paternal uncle, Hajjaj bin Yusuf, a noted Umayyad governor.

Foreign Sufis that came to India

The most well-known foreign arrivals in India included:

- **Abul Hasan al-Hujweri** (990-1077), a Persian-speaking Ghaznavi Sufi who is popularly remembered in the subcontinent as *Data Ganj Bakhsh*;
- **Haji Hūd** (1025-1141), who was born in Syria but decided to come to India after being divinely inspired and became extremely active in preaching and converting a large number of persons to Islam;
- **Shah Yusuf Gardezi** (11th century) who came to India from Gardez, Afghanistan, and is buried in Multan where his tomb was visited by the famous historian, Arnold Joseph Toynbee;
- **Mu'inuddin Chishti** (1141-1230), who was born in Sajistan in Central Asia. He saw the Prophet Muhammad^{sa} in a dream and was asked to go to the land of India. He established the Chishti Order of Sufism in India;
- **Baba Fakhruddin Suhrawardi** (1169-1295), who was a ruler of Sistan, Iran, but came to India at the advice of his Shaikh;
- **Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki** (1173-1235), who was born in Turkistan and was educated in Baghdad. He was the spiritual disciple of Mu'inuddin Chishti and was sent to Delhi as the representative of the Chistiyya Order;
- **Lal Shahbaz Qalandar** (1177-1274), who was born in Marwand, Iran, and was a great scholar and fluent in many languages. Being a contemporary of Rumi, he travelled extensively in the Muslim world before settling down in Sehwan, Sindh, India, where he lies buried;
- **Ala'uddin Sabir Kaliyari** (1196-1291), who was born in Herat, Afghanistan, and travelled to Kaliyar, near Saharanpur in the State of Uttarakhand;

- **Syed Jalaluddin Bukhāri ‘*Surkh-Posh*’** (1199-1291), who came to India from Bukhara around 1238. He was a follower of Baha’uddin Zakariya of the Suhrawardiyya Order;
- **Fakhruddin Ibrahim ‘Iraqi** (1213-1289), who was born in the village of Kamjan, near the city of Hamadan in Iran. During his lifetime, he spent a number of years in Multan, in present-day Pakistan, as well as in Konya and Tokat in Turkey;
- **Shah Jalaluddin** (1271-1347), who came to Bengal from Turkey and was responsible for the large-scale conversions to Islam in that land;
- **Shahabuddin Hamdāni** (1314-1384), who was born in Iran but travelled extensively in Kashmir where he preached Islam to the local population;
- **Khwaja Baqi Billah** (1564-1603), who was born in Kabul, Afghanistan, and pioneered the Naqshbandiyya Order in India.

Sufis that were Born Locally in India

Later scholars and mystics that were born and raised locally in India included:

- **Fariduddin Ganj Shakar** (1173-1266), known popularly as Baba Farīd, was a Sufi saint from Pakpattan. He used Punjabi language in his mystical poetry and laid the foundation of Punjabi literature;
- **Nizamuddin Auliya** (1238-1325), who was largely responsible for a paradigm shift towards spirituality in Delhi. He belonged to the Chishtiyya Order that believed in obtaining God’s nearness through renunciation of the world and service to humanity;

- **Amir Khusrow** (1253-1325), a disciple of Nizamuddin Auliya and an iconic figure in the cultural scene of India. He is considered the father of *Qawwali*, a devotional music form specific to the Sufis in India;
- **Shah Rukne 'Alam of Multan** (1251-1335), who belonged to the Suhrawardiyya Sufi Order. He was the grandson and successor of Baha'uddin Zakariya;
- **Isma'il Qureshi al-Hashmi** (1260-1349), the grandson of Shaikh Baha'uddin Zakariya and the younger brother of Shah Rukne 'Alam. He was a noted saint from Allahabad and belonged to the Suhrawardiyya Order;
- **Nasiruddin Mahmūd** (1273-1356), popularly known as *Roshan Chiragh-e-Delhi*—meaning the illuminated lamp of Delhi. He was a disciple of Nizamuddin Auliya and belonged to the Chishtiyya Order;
- **Akhi Sirāj A'ina-e-Hind** (1300-1357), a Bengali Sufi whose shrine attracts hundreds of thousands of devotees each year. He was a disciple of Nizamuddin Auliya and belonged to the Chishtiyya Order;
- **'Ala-ul Haq Pandavi** (13th century), who was a disciple of Akhi Sirāj A'ina-e-Hind and a Sufi saint from Bengal. He belonged to the Chishtiyya Order;
- **Ashraf Jahangir Semnani** (1287-1386), a Sufi saint from Bengal who belonged to both Chishtiyya and Qadiriyya Orders. He was a disciple of 'Ala-ul Haq Pandavi;
- **Jahaniyan Jahangasht al-Bukhari** (1308-1384), who was the grandson of Syed Jalaluddin Bukhārī '*Surkh Posh*'. He came from Bahawalpur in Punjab and his descendents are known as Bukhari;

- **Syed Muhammad Husaini *Banda Nawāz*** (1321-1422), who helped in the spreading Islam in Baluchistan and Afghanistan. He was a disciple of Nasiruddin Chiragh Dehlavi;
- **Makhdūm ‘Ali Mahimi** (1372-1431), who is credited with writing the first exegesis of the Holy Qur’an in India;
- **Mian Mir** (1550-1635) who was a spiritual instructor to Dara Shikoh—the eldest son of the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan. He followed the Qadiriyya Order;
- **Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi** (1564-1624), who was known as Mujaddid Alif Sani, or Reviver of the Second Millennium. He belonged to the Naqshbandiyya Order of Sufis;
- **Shah Abdul Latīf Bhittāi** (1689-1752), who was a noted Sufi from Sindh and regarded the greatest Muslim poet of Sindhi language;
- **Shah Waliullah Muhaddath Dehlawi** (1703-1762), was a great scholar, Mujaddid (Reviver), Muhaddath and Sufi from Delhi. He lived during the reign of the Mughal king, Aurangzeb;
- **Khwaja Mir Dard** (1721-1785), a noted mystic and literary scholar. He was one of the three major Urdu language poets of the Delhi School along with Mir Taqi Mir and Mirza Sauda;
- **Shah ‘Abdul Aziz Dehlawi** (1745-1823), who is considered a Mujaddid (Reviver) of the eighteenth century and a proponent of the Naqshbandiyya Order. He lived during the reign of the Mughal Emperor Muhammad Shah;
- **Shah Isma‘il ‘*Shaheed*’** (1779-1831), who was an Islamic scholar and a warrior who fought along Syed Ahmad Brelwi against the Sikhs in Punjab. He was martyred in a fierce battle;

- **Syed Ahmad Barelvi** (1786-1831), who was an Islamic activist and revolutionary. He was martyred at Balakot while fighting against the Sikhs.

Sufi Tariqas that were Established in India

Many Sufi *Tariqas* (Orders) that were originally founded in the Middle East were eventually brought to India through their noted adherents:

- The Shadhiliyya Order, founded by Abu Hasan Ash-Shadhili, was brought to India by **Shaikh Abu Bakr Miskīn** and **Shaikh Mir Ahmad Ibrahim**;
- The Chishtiyya Order of Central Asia took root in India under **Mu'inuddin Chishti**;
- The Suhrawardiyya Order was brought to India by **Baha'uddin Zakariya** (1170-1267);
- The Kubrawiyya Order was founded by **Najmuddin al Kubra** (d. 1221) in Tashkent and became important in Kashmir during the late fourteenth century;
- The Naqshbandiyya Order, initially founded by Bahā'uddin Naqshband in Bukhara and Uzbekistan, was introduced to India by **Khwaja Muhammad al-Baqi Billah** (1564-1605);
- The Qadiriyya Order founded by 'Abdul Qadir Jilani was introduced to India by 'Abdul **Karim Jili** (1366-1424).

Thus, with a large-scale arrival of foreign-born scholars and Sufis and a comparable crop of local-born '*ulema* and Sufis, the seat of Islamic scholarship and learning gradually shifted from the Middle East to the land of India. Slowly but steadily, the land of India went through the process of grooming for the second advent of the Messiah.

POLITICAL CONDITIONS IN INDIA

At the time of the Promised Messiah's advent, India was ruled by the British. The British gained foothold in India through their East India Company that received its royal charter in 1600 CE to trade with India. The Company gained dominion over parts of the Indian subcontinent after the Battle of Plassey in 1757. Its rule lasted until 1857 when, after the Indian mutiny and rebellion, the Company's rule was abolished and the British Government took direct administrative control of India that initiated the British Raj. The one hundred and ninety year rule of the British in India—initially through the East India Company and later through direct administration—ended at the time of the partition of the subcontinent into India and Pakistan in 1947.

Through much of the life of the Promised Messiah^{as}, Great Britain was ruled by Queen Victoria (1819-1901) whose reign lasted from 1837 until her death in 1901. Her rule of nearly 64 years is known as the Victorian Era that was marked by a great expansion of the British Empire.

While India remained under foreign dominion during the life of the Promised Messiah^{as}, several benefits flowed to the country that included higher education, economic betterment, establishment of many industries, laying out of the extensive railway system, construction of irrigation canals and establishment and modernisation of the legal system. At the same time, the British established the civil service in India, patterned along its own system, which is being followed in India and Pakistan to this very day.

The greatest contribution of Britain to India was the establishment of a climate of peace and security for the populace under a relatively fair legal system. Being divided into myriad political states, ethnic groups and religious communities, the land of India would have certainly fallen into civil conflicts had the British not been there.

Thus, some of the credit for the very extensive and successful propagation of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's mission and teachings in India definitely goes to the very peaceful environment that existed under the British Raj. Had he appeared in a Muslim-majority country such as Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Egypt, Saudi Arabia or any other such place, he would certainly have been either exiled, imprisoned or—worse—executed.

There was absolutely no tolerance for radical thinking in any Islamic country at that time. It was the protective umbrella of the British—much of it through their just and fair legal system—that allowed Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} to speak freely and introduce ideas that were clearly considered heretical by the Muslim minority in India.

With all the positives that the British brought to India, there was also a negative aspect that included the patronisation of Christian clergies and churches to convert the local population. Thus, many Hindus and Muslims left their ancestral faiths and adopted the religion of the rulers. Through their scholars and clergies, the Christians portrayed Islam and its founder in a disparaging and unsympathetic manner. This effort of the Christian missionaries met with strong rebuttal from Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} who not only refuted their arguments but also showed gross weaknesses in Christian theology.

INVENTIONS AND DISCOVERIES

While the New Testament makes no reference to the fact that Jesus' return will coincide with a period of great discoveries and inventions, the Holy Qur'an does make a reference to this situation in the Latter Days:

And when the beasts are gathered together,
And when the seas are made to flow forth,
And when people are brought together,
Al-Takwīr, 81:6-8

And when the books are spread abroad,
And when the heaven is laid bare,
Al-Takwīr, 81:11-12

Throughout human history, man has been making discoveries and inventing tools and implements for his use. Some of the most basic discoveries and inventions included fire, wheel, nail, roof supports, bridges and bricks. Such discoveries and inventions were likely made independently by several persons, many times over, all over the world. However, modern

discoveries and inventions had to wait until such time that our knowledge and imagination became more advanced and sophisticated.

For a long time, the rate at which new discoveries and inventions were being made remained relatively constant with only a gentle increase over time. For much of recorded history, the impact of new discoveries and inventions was rather modest. However, coinciding with the advent of the Promised Messiah^{as}, the rate of such discoveries and inventions has accelerated and has taken on an exponential trend.

Of the most significant and important discoveries and inventions of Latter Days, the only one that took place more than a century *prior* to the birth of the Promised Messiah^{as} was the steam engine that ushered in the Industrial Revolution in Europe. All other significant discoveries and inventions have taken place either during the life of the Promised Messiah^{as} or during the century following his demise—a period that could easily be taken as part of his advent.

Such inventions as electricity, modern steel using Bessemer process, railroad and petroleum during the later part of the nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth century—from 1870 to 1914—led to what is known as the Second Industrial Revolution or the Technological Revolution.

The Tables below show these discoveries and inventions in a chronological order.

Table 10
Significant Inventions and Discoveries before the Advent of the Promised Messiah^{as}

Year	Invention / discovery
1712	Steam Engine First commercial engine produced by Thomas Newcomen
1781	Discovery of Uranus First expansion of the boundaries of the solar system
1805	Atomic Theory John Dalton proposes Atomic Theory in chemistry

Table 11
Significant Inventions and Discoveries during the life of the Promised Messiah^{as}

Year	Invention / discovery
1830	Geologic Principle of Uniformitarianism

	Discovered by Charles Lyell
1834	Electric Motor Invented by Moritz von Jacobi
1836	Railway Experimental railway constructed in India
1837	Telegraph First commercial telegraph by Cooke and Wheatstone
1837	Postage Stamp Rowland Hill invents the postage stamp for mail delivery
1839	Photography Louis Daguerre develops the daguerreotype process
1843	Thermodynamics First Law of Thermodynamics by James P. Joule
1847	Zoo First zoo opens in England
1859	Theory of Evolution Charles Darwin presents the theory of evolution
1859	Petroleum First oil well drilled in Pennsylvania
1860	Internal Combustion Engine Invented by Jean Joseph Etienne Lenoir
1861	Germ Theory Louis Pasteur presents Germ Theory of illnesses
1862	Speed of Light Leon Foucault determines speed of light to within 0.6% of its true value
1864	Electromagnetism James Maxwell presents Theory of Electromagnetics
1865	Mendel's Law of Inheritance Gregor Mendel establishes the law that is the basis for genetics
1869	Ocean-joining Canal Suez Canal joined Mediterranean Ocean and Red Sea
1875	Full-Thickness Skin Graft By John R. Wolfe and Fedor Krause
1876	Telephone Invented by Alexander Graham Bell
1877	Phonograph, sound recording device Thomas Edison invented the first practical recording device
1878	Light Bulb Invented independently by Joseph Swan and Thomas Edison
1881	Power Station First public Power Station built at Godalming, U.K.

1883	First Thyroid Transplant By Theodor Kocher
1886	Automobile Invented by Karl Benz
1892	Existence of Virus Dmitri Ivanovsky discovers the existence of viruses
1895	X-rays Wilhelm Rontgen discovers X-rays
1896	Radioactivity Henri Becquerel discovers radioactivity. Marie Curie discovered Polonium and radium in 1898 and coined the term “radioactivity”.
1897	Radio Nikolai Tesla received the first radio patent
1897	Electron Discovered by J. Thompson
1900	Quantum Hypothesis First proposed by Max Planck
1903	Airplane First flight of heavier-than-air machines by Wright brothers
1904	Ocean-joining Canal Panama Canal joined Atlantic and Pacific Oceans
1905	Special Theory of Relativity Albert Einstein presents Special Theory of Relativity
1905	Radiometric Dating Invented by Ernest Rutherford as a method to date the earth
1905	Full Thickness Corneal Transplant on Humans By Eduard Konrad Zirm, an Austrian ophthalmologist
1907	Speed of Light E.B. Rosa and N.E. Dorsey measure the speed of light to within 0.0015% of its true value

Table 12
Significant Inventions and Discoveries during the century following the demise of the Promised Messiah^{as}

Year	Invention / discovery
1911	Atomic Nucleus Discovered by Ernest Rutherford
1912	Continental Drift Discovered by Alfred Wagner
1913	Model of the Atom Presented by Niels Bohr

1913	Geologic Time Scale Proposed by Arthur Holmes to describe major events
1915	General Theory of Relativity Albert Einstein proposes General Theory of Relativity
1922	Insulin Banting, Best, Collip and Macleod produce Insulin
1924	Milky Way galaxy Edwin Hubble proposes that Milky Way is a galaxy
1927	Uncertainty Principle Proposed by Werner Heisenberg
1927	Theory of Big Bang Proposed by Georges Lemaitre
1927	Electronic Television Demonstrated by Philo Taylor Farnsworth
1928	Antibiotics Alexander Fleming discovers Penicillin
1929	Expansion of the Universe Edwin Hubble proposes Hubble's Law
1930	Discovery of Pluto A dwarf planet that lies in the Kuiper belt beyond Neptune
1932	Neutron James Chadwick discovers Neutron
1938	Nuclear Fission Discovered by Hahn, Meitner and Strassmann
1939	Electronic Digital Computer Invented by John Vincent Atanasoff at Iowa State College
1939	Helicopter Igor Sikorsky builds the first truly practical helicopter
1942	Nuclear Chain Reaction Built by Enrico Fermi at the University of Chicago
1943	DNA Discovered by Oswald Avery. Crick and Watson discover the helical structure of the DNA in 1953.
1947	Transistor Invented by Shockley, Bardeen and Brattain
1952	Polio vaccine Jonas Salk developed and tested first polio vaccine
1954	First Successful Kidney Transplant By Dr. Joseph Murray at PBB Hospital in Boston
1957	Space Satellite Soviet Union launches Sputnik, the first space satellite

1963	Plate Tectonics Lawrence Morley, Fred Vine and Drummond Matthews discover palaeomagnetic stripes in ocean and use it as evidence of plate tectonics
1964	Quarks Gell-Mann and Zweig postulate Quarks (standard model)
1964	Cosmic Microwave Background Radiation Anro Penzias and Robert Wilson discover CMBR
1966	First Successful Pancreas Transplant By Richard Lillehei and William Kelly, in the USA
1967	First Successful Liver Transplant By Thomas Starzl, in the USA
1967	First Successful Heart Transplant By Christian Barnard, in South Africa
1967	Pulsar Burnell and Hewish discover the first Pulsar
1969	Walk on the Moon First astronauts walk on the moon
1973	Cell Phone Martin Cooper develops the first handheld cell phone
1976	Personal Home Computer Steve Wozniak and Steve Jobs launch Apple I
1981	First Successful Heart-Lung Transplant By Dr. Norman Shumway
1991	World Wide Web goes into operation Created by Tim Berners-Lee
1995	Extra-solar Planet Mayor and Queloz observe the first exoplanet
1997	Cloning “Dolly” the sheep cloned at Roslin Institute
1998	Dark Energy Discovery of accelerated expansion of the universe
2001	Human Genome First draft of the Human Genome project published
2012	Higgs Boson The Higgs Boson particle discovered at CERN
2015	Water on Mars Traces of liquid water discovered on Mars
2016	Gravitational Waves LIGO team detects Gravitational Waves from a black hole
2016	Habitable Exo-planet Potentially habitable exoplanet discovered near Proxima Centauri

As we see in the above Tables, the advent of the Promised Messiah^{as} coincides with unusual discoveries and inventions in the areas of:

- **Communication** (telegraph, postage stamp, photography, phonograph, telephone, radio, television, handheld cell phone);
- **Transportation** (railway, petroleum, internal combustion engine, ocean-joining canals, automobile, airplane, helicopter, space satellite, walk on the moon);
- **Human convenience** (electric motor, light bulb, power station, electronic digital computer, transistor, world wide web, home computer, and many more);
- **Medicine** (skin graft, thyroid transplant, corneal transplant, insulin, antibiotics, polio vaccine, kidney transplant, pancreas transplant, liver transplant, heart transplant, heart-lung transplant);
- **Astronomy** (Milky Way galaxy, Big Bang theory, expansion of the universe, discovery of Pluto, Cosmic Microwave Background Radiation, Pulsar, extra-solar planets, dark energy, gravitational waves);
- **Biology** (theory of evolution, germ theory, Mendel's law of inheritance, existence of virus, DNA, cloning, mapping of human Genome);
- **Physics and Chemistry** (thermodynamics, electromagnetism, X-rays, radioactivity, electron, quantum hypothesis, theory of relativity, speed of light, atomic nucleus, model of the atom, uncertainty principle, neutron, nuclear fission, nuclear chain reaction, quarks, Higgs boson);
- **Geology** (principle of uniformitarianism, radiometric dating, continental drift, geologic time scale, plate tectonics).

Chapter 16

THE PURPOSE OF JESUS' RETURN

The actual return of Jesus Christ^{as} took place at a time when the world was entering a new phase in its chequered history, and advances in science and technology began to dominate this new era. With the development of the new sciences, the perspective on nature changed from being the work of God to simply a set of laws that governed the mechanical operation of the universe. The same Nature that was perceived earlier as a *means* to see the Face of God, was now looked upon as an *end in itself*.

The rapid scientific progress during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries only helped to confirm this period as the continuing Age of Reason. The unfortunate side effect of this so-called progress has been that the Person of God is pushed back in our societies and religion has become weak and besieged. People feel ashamed to call themselves *religious* and any belief in God or religion has become synonymous with backwardness and ignorance.

The rise of rationalism during the past three centuries has severely undermined the validity of the world's great religions. With each new discovery and scientific advance, the concept of God—as the sole Nourisher and Governor of the universe—has been given up in favour of natural laws. Under the increasing influence of rationalism, the new generation of philosophers and scientists came up with new slogans and catchphrases. Thus:

- Karl Marx⁸⁰, the German revolutionary, declared that “religion was the opium of the people”;
- Friedrich Nietzsche⁸¹, the German philosopher, wrote that “God was dead”;

⁸⁰ Karl Marx (1818-1883), the German philosopher, economist and revolutionary. With the help of Friedrich Engels he wrote the *Communist Manifesto* (1848) and *Das Kapital* (1867-1894) that had a profound effect on the rise of socialism and the spread of Communism in the world.

- Sigmund Freud⁸², the Austrian psychoanalyst, said that “religion was an obsessional neurosis of humanity”;
- Mencken⁸³, the American historian, called God “a refuge of the incompetent and the miserable”;
- E.M. Cioran⁸⁴, the Romanian-born French philosopher, called God a “disease” of which the newer generations were considered to be cured;
- Arthur C. Clarke (1917-2008), the chairman of the British Interplanetary Society, a futurist and a well known science-fiction writer, said that: “Religion is the most malevolent of all mind viruses.”
- Steven Weinberg (born 1933), the winner of the 1979 Nobel Prize for physics (along with Professor Abdus Salam), said: “Religion is an insult to human dignity. With or without it, you’d have good people doing good things and evil people doing bad things, but for good people to do bad things, it takes religion.”

The complete removal of God and morality from the teachings of modern social philosophers turned off many people from the pursuit of religion.

⁸¹ Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), the German philosopher who argued that Christianity’s emphasis on afterlife makes its followers less capable of coping with the earthly life. He proposed the concept of an ideal human being, the *Urbemensch* (translated as Superman), who could channel passions creatively instead of suppressing them.

⁸² Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), the Austrian physician and psychoanalyst who proposed that much of the human psychological disorder could be traced to infantile psychosexual conflicts.

⁸³ H.L. Mencken (1880-1956), the American historian, journalist and unsuccessful novelist.

⁸⁴ E.M. Cioran (b. 1911), Romanian-born French philosopher.

Eventually, it became unfashionable to be considered religious. Even the faith of Islam—mankind's last major religion—was not spared the indignity of deteriorating to a system without real spirit. Despite the appearance of numerous saints, reformers and Sufis to renew the spirit of this faith, Islam went into a steady decline. This decay and degeneration of the faith may have progressed even further had God not decreed a rebirth and rejuvenation of spirituality during the Latter Days. This renaissance of true Islamic spirit and the dawn of another spiritual age coincided with the advent of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} in the latter half of the nineteenth century as the returning Messiah.

Claiming to be the metaphoric embodiment of Jesus Christ^{as} who was promised to come in Christianity and Islam, he set about the reformation of the people. He debated with Christians, Hindus and Muslims to remove encrustations from their faiths that had crept in over their histories and hid their pristine teachings. He debated with agnostics, atheists and followers of naturalism, outlining the road map that could unite them with God. Through more than eighty books and countless posters and letters, he counselled, admonished and guided the people towards righteousness, morality and decency. In his teachings, he emphasised a personal relationship with God, and love and kindness unto humanity. To continue his work after his demise, he laid the foundation of a Movement, which attracted noble and pious spirits and spread his message in the entire world. The Movement is dedicated to the restoration of the pristine spirit of Islam and presenting its unblemished face to the world.

In his book *A'īna Kamālāt Islam*, the Promised Messiah^{as} explains as to why his advent took place at the exact time that it did and how the present-day science and philosophy are attacking the religion of Islam. In the excerpt given below, he addresses Syed Ahmad Khan⁸⁵, C.S.I., in the following words [English translation from *Essence of Islam*, vol. 4, p. 234-235]:

⁸⁵ Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-1898) was an Indian Muslim philosopher who worked for the Indian judicial branch until his retirement. Decrying the general orthodoxy of the Muslims during his time, he began promoting Western-style scientific education. Being greatly influenced by Western thought and philosophy, Syed Ahmad Khan gave up his belief in the power of prayer. For his loyalty to the British during the Indian Rebellion of 1857 and for his services in the field of education, he was awarded knighthood and Knight Commander of the

I inform you and convey to you the glad tidings that the Sailor, Who is the Lord of the heaven and the earth, has heard the supplication of those confronted with the tempest and has fulfilled the promise He made in His Holy Word to save His vessel at the time of the tempest. He has appointed one of His servants that is to say, this humble one who is now speaking to you, and has explained to him the devices to weather the storm and that would render it unnecessary to throw overboard the boxes of valuables. The time is near when heaven will call out: “And it was said, ‘O earth, swallow thy water, and O sky, cease *raining*.’ And the water was made to subside and the matter was ended. And *the Ark* came to rest on al-Judī.⁸⁶”

But right now the flood is at its height. At the approach of this flood God Almighty appointed this humble one and commanded: That is, build thou the Ark under Our eyes and according to Our directions. This Ark would be in no danger from the tempest. It would be supported by God’s hand. This then is the Ark of pure Islam to which I call the people to board. If you are awake, arise and board this Ark quickly for the flood is raging upon the earth and every life is in danger.

If your nature is just, then you can be the first to admit to the existence of this tempest. In fact, you have already admitted many times that regarding the promise in the Holy Qur’an to save the Ark of Islam, that tempest and its time is this present age. Such a period of tempest has never visited this *Ummah* as it is doing now. The world has never seen such conflicts between knowledge and religion like the ones going on now. No earlier physics or philosophy has ever tried to erase the name of Islam as the present science is trying to do.

Who can show us the example of such highway robberies regarding intellect and knowledge, which we are seeing today with our own eyes? Who has the ability to show any instance of such intellectual tempest in earlier times which we are now witnessing day and night? Where is the precedent of such subtle and ingenious attacks by philosophy and atheism in the earlier days? Where can we find such intricate and twisted intellectual assaults in previous eras? Where are such intellectual and scholarly misfortunes in earlier times, which Islam faces now? When were such difficulties faced in any previous time, which are being faced today? Would you not admit that the kind of such extreme troubles and

Star of India, earning the titles of “Sir”, “KCSI” (Knight Commander of the Order of the Star of India) and “CSI” (Companion of the Order of the Star of India).

⁸⁶ *Surah Hūd*, 11:45.

hardships regarding intellectual discussions which are now afflicting Islam, never afflicted in earlier times? Nor can an example be seen from the time of Adam until this very moment.

Do you not admit the fact that this evil of philosophy and science is a thousand times worse in intensity and strength than the one that spread in Muslim countries from the knowledge of the Greeks? Do you not admit to this fact that the enemy that is born now is greater in might than the totality of all those who were born in different times?

Then where can you run from this admission that that pure promise which is being vocalised by these noble words that “Verily, We Ourselves have sent down the Exhortation, and most surely We will be its Guardian⁸⁷,” is about the present days. It is telling that when Islam will face the time of great tribulation—and a tough opponent will stand against it and a great tempest will rage—then God shall apply the remedy Himself. Moreover, He Himself shall provide an Ark to save from this tempest. That Ark is the invitation by this humble one. If anyone can hear, he should listen.

(*A'īna Kamālāt Islam, Rūḥānī Khazāin* volume 5, 1984 hardcover edition, Footnote pages 261-264)

It is quite clear from the above excerpt that one of the most important reasons for the advent of the Promised Messiah^{as}—at the time that he actually came—was to fight the lack of true spirit of religiosity in the world, which was increasingly coming under the sway of modern sciences and philosophy.

A question arises as to why, out of so many prophets and messengers that have come to the world, God named the one who was to appear in the Latter Days as Jesus^{as}. What was so special about this particular Prophet? There seem to be two explanations for this.

The first explanation is that there is great similarity between Jesus^{as} of Nazareth and Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} of Qadian. Both are non-law-giving prophets; both appeared approximately thirteen centuries after the Law-giving prophets of their respective dispensations; both emphasised humility, meekness and kindness; and both came to restore the original teachings of their respective law-giving predecessors that had fallen victim to decay and innovation. At the same time, the early history of Ahmadiyya

⁸⁷ *Surah al-Hijr*, 15:10.

Islam parallels the spread of early Christianity: both took hold under the foreign rule; both were denied temporal power for a long time; and the followers of both communities were persecuted for a number of decades.

The second explanation is provided by the Promised Messiah^{as} himself in one of his Persian couplet [*Durr-e Samīn* Farsi, page 407; English translation from *Essence of Islam*, vol.4, p. 63]:

چوں مرا حکم از پئے قوم مسیحی داده اند
مصلحت را بن مریم نام من بنهاده اند

As I was invested with authority for the Christians,
I was, therefore, named the son of Mary.

In summary, the return of Jesus Christ^{as}, as mentioned in the New Testament, was not a trivial promise on the part of God. It was meant to check the materialistic influence of modern science and technology and to usher in a new age of spirituality. Being an actual resident of the planet for so many years, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} had seen these new emerging threats to humanity's happiness and salvation with his own eyes. With the help and guidance of God, he charted new courses to take the people across the maelstrom of modern-day indecencies and immoralities. Through personal experience, he showed the people how to love God and reach His threshold.

With the advent of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} as the returning Messiah, most the New Testament prophecies have been fulfilled to the last letter. The one, who was awaited for nearly two thousand years, has come already! Referring to the need of the times and the many Signs that were shown by God in his support, he writes in his poetry:

Why do you hesitate to accept the Messiah,
Whose resemblance to the earlier Messiah has been vouched by God?

(*Durr-e Samīn, Mutafarraḡ Ash 'ār*) [translation from *Essence of Islam*, vol. 4, p. 103-104]

•

Why do you wonder if I have come as the Messiah;
The breeze of the spring carry the fragrance of the Messiah.

There is great eagerness in heaven in support of the call of truth;

Angels are descending upon the well disposed.

The independent thinkers of Europe are turning in this direction;

The pulse of the spiritually dead has begun to beat suddenly.

(*Munājāt aur Tablīgh Haq*, couplets 90-92) [translation from *Essence of Islam*, vol. 4, p. 102]

•

Listen to the voice of heaven, which proclaims: “The Messiah has come, the
Messiah has come,”

Also listen to the earth which proclaims: “The victorious Imam has arrived”.

The heaven is showing signs and the earth says: “This is the time”—

These two witnesses are desperately crying out for me.

(*Munājāt aur Tablīgh Haq*, couplets 98-99) [translation from *Essence of Islam*, vol.4 p. 102]

•

I am the Son of Mary but I have not descended from the sky;

I am *Mahdi*, too, but without sword and without war.

I have no concern with the country or any interest in wars;

My task is to conquer the hearts—not the territory.

(*Munājāt aur Tablīgh Haq*, couplets 268-269)

•

I am that water from heavens that came on time;

I am that light from God by which the day became evident.

(*Munājāt aur Tablīgh Haq*, couplet 358)

•

It was the time for the Messiah—not the time for someone else;

If I had not come, someone else would have come!

(*Durr-e Samīn, Mutafarraḡ Ash'ār*)

•

Finally, with the fulfilment of the many prophesied signs about his advent, the Promised Messiah^{as} writes in his Persian poems:

Look at the sky that the sun and moon have darkened;

The earth is bringing forth the plague in order to scare.

[*Durr-e Samīn* Farsi, page 396]

•

The sky has shown many Signs for the sake of my truth;
And the earth, too, says “It is time,” with cries and groans.

[*Durr-e Samīn* Farsi, page 398]

•

The sky rains its Signs—the earth proclaims: “It is the time”—
These two witnesses are standing for my attestation.

[*Durr-e Samīn* Farsi, page 407]

•

The sky rains its Signs—the earth proclaims: “It is the time”—

The promises of the prophets and messengers have manifested themselves. [*Durr-e Samīn* Farsi, page 383]

•

The heavens give testimony of my truth all the time;

Then why should I grieve that the dwellers of the earth deny me?

[*Durr-e Samīn* Farsi, page 192]

•

The sky and the sun and moon give their testimony

So that you do not deny me out of ignorance and unawareness.

[*Durr-e Samīn* Farsi, page 364]

•

I say with a loud voice that I am the Messiah—

I am the vicegerent of that King Who is in the heavens.

[*Durr-e Samīn* Farsi, page 344]

•

I have come so that I can illuminate the path of truth—

And take him unto the Beloved one who is righteous.

I have come to open the door to knowledge and guidance

And show the dwellers of earth things that are heavenly.

[*Durr-e Samīn* Farsi, page 354]

•

That Messiah whose station is spoken of in the sky,

It is Your kindness that You made me one out of this dust.

[*Durr-e Samīn* Farsi, page 379]

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